

# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization  
speaking for the blind—it is the blind speaking for themselves.

Printed at  
2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708

JANUARY-----1970

## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Published monthly in braille and distributed free to the blind by the National Federation of the Blind. President: Kenneth Jernigan, 524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50309.

Inkprint edition produced and distributed by the National Federation of the Blind.

EDITOR: Perry Sundquist, 4651 Mead Avenue, Sacramento, California, 95822. Associate Editor: Hazel tenBroek, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California, 94708.

News items should be sent to the Editor.

Address changes should be sent to 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California, 94708.

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“I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (or, “\_\_\_ percent of my net estate”, or “the following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_\_\_”) to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee.”

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION  
INNOVATION: PANACEA OR PANDEMONIUM?

by  
Kenneth Jernigan

[Editor's Note: This Address was delivered at the Governor's Conference on the Future of Education held in Des Moines during October, 1969. The two-day conference was attended by educational leaders of the state and about 800 delegates interested as professionals in the field.]

The question before us on this panel is: Educational Innovation—Panacea or Pandemonium. My response to that question is, summarily, that innovation cannot be a panacea, and need not become pandemonium. At the least it is a palliative, and at best it may be a progression. Nothing is more evident today, to the layman as well as to the expert, than that our “systems for the delivery of learning”—that is, our schools—are in trouble. Not only in Iowa, but all over the land—and at all levels from elementary to university—we seem to be going “up the down staircase.”

At the college level, students in significant proportions, if not in alarming numbers, militantly confront and sometimes defy their professors and administrators. The common denominator of their various demands is, however, not revolution—at least not yet—but innovation. The cliché most commonly employed to express this demand is “relevance”; and that tiresome term (if it means anything at all) means new departures both in the substance and procedure, the goals and the methods, of academic experience. But that is not all there is to the theme of innovation in higher education. Two recent and broadly influential studies of the college crisis, neither of them concerned primarily with student protest—and both of them the work of sociologists—illustrate in their titles the centrality of the principle of innovation. One is The Academic Revolution, by Christopher Jencks and David Riesman; the other is The Reform of General Education, by Daniel Bell. Let me, for the moment, simply take note of this pervasive and persistent emphasis on innovation in the current literature on the higher learning in America.

At the secondary level the issues are not quite the same but are no less caught up in considerations of reform and experimental change. Here the problem is more commonly one of drop-outs than of sit-ins (although Students for a Democratic Society, as you know, has begun a campaign to organize the high schools); and questions of contemporary relevance, immediacy, and cogency, are the burning issues in social studies, if not everywhere else in the curriculum.

At the elementary level, where creativity has its native stronghold, the theme of innovation has been a constant—perhaps the only constant—for more generations than any one now living can remember. Whatever may be said in criticism of our primary schools today, they are a far cry from the Dotheboys Halls of Dickens' time, where Nicholas Nickleby and his fellow scholars carried on their rote learning and ritual recitations in constant terror and discomfort—under pain of daily floggings designed to correct that constitutional flaw in the disposition of all children known to the devout as “infant

depravity”.

Innovation in the shape of humanitarian reform and child-centered learning entered the American schoolhouse with John Dewey and his progressive philosophy even before the turn of the century. It has since been revitalized through successive theoretical transfusions, notably the self-motivating methods of the Montessori school; and today, after many backings and fillings, innovation is again a conspicuous feature of learning theory and methodology in elementary education. But the tide, of course, does not flow all one way. The innovative spirit, with its passion for change and its impatience toward convention, never proceeds very far in any community without encountering resistance; and in the present conservative climate of opinion across the country (brought on in large part, as I believe, by excessive demands for change), it is unlikely that innovators will have their way entirely at any stage of the educational ladder.

No doubt this is as it should be. The history of American education may well be read as a dialectical process of alternating challenge and response between the forces of innovation and those of tradition. But it should not be supposed that this competition of viewpoints is unhealthy in principle or destructive in tendency. On the contrary, it is the educational analogue of the democratic political process on one hand and of the competitive enterprise system on the other. For the debate I am talking about is not over ends and basic values, but rather over means and interpretations. The real enemy of innovation, it should be understood, is not tradition but inertia. Tradition, wherever it is viable and valuable, welcomes change and progress; innovation, wherever it is sensible and successful, soon turns into tradition. The relationship between innovation and tradition, in the school as in society, is properly not one of conflict but of continuity. Each perspective in fact needs the other. Without regular injections of innovative energy, tradition deteriorates into dogma; without the sober and corrective prudence of traditional wisdom, innovation becomes mere novelty, hovering on the edge of chaos.

I hope that I have said enough to demonstrate my own partiality for innovation, disciplined by a respect for the past, in the curriculum and the classroom at all levels of the educational system. Indeed, it would be a betrayal of my own professional career and commitment were I to suggest otherwise. As director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind over the past dozen years, I have been at the storm center (some might say I have been the storm center) of full-fledged revolution in the education of blind people—away from conventional indoctrination in the sheltered blind trades and from adjustment to lives of quiet desperation toward the higher ground of complete equality, independence, and participation. The blind students who pass through our rehabilitation center here in Des Moines emerge not as dependent conformists ready for the broom shop and the rocking chair, but as self-sufficient citizens ready to lead their own lives, to go their own way and to grow their own way—rebels against the “establishment”, no doubt, but rebels with a cause. That cause, that sense of mission, may be defined as faith in their own capacity, individually and collectively, to assume the active role of “change agents” in the uncomprehending world around them: more specifically, to reconstruct the social landscape of the country of the blind. Our commitment in the programs of the Iowa Commission is therefore to innovation in the fullest sense, both in ends and means; and in the exercise of this commitment we are continuously experimenting and improvising, remaking and revamping,



branching out and breaking through, in every phase of our operation.

Having said that much for innovation, let me reverse direction and say a few words against it. It is a truism that we live in an age more accustomed to change, more comfortable with abrupt transitions and large-scale alterations, than any previous age in history. Moreover, we Americans are geared toward the future, almost obsessively forward-looking, utterly fascinated with the shape of things to come. Planning, forecasting, prognosticating, predicting, projecting, extrapolating—these are our characteristic national pastimes. Witness, as a case in point, the structure and focus of the present conference. Its subject is education, yes; but it is not “education today”, let alone “education in retrospect or in historical perspective”. No; it is “The Future of Education.” And the opening panel this morning was appropriately entitled “2001: An Education Odyssey”.

Well and good. As an avid science-fiction reader and amateur futurist myself, it would come with ill grace from me to scorn this forward-oriented posture. My concern is only that, in our haste to get to tomorrowland, in our absorption with the themes of change and innovation, we may overlook the stubborn realities of today and disdain the crucial lessons of yesterday. In the field of education, as in that of government, we cannot afford to break precipitously with what Walter Lippmann has termed the “traditions of civility” and what Edmund Burke called the “prudential wisdom of the past”. For to break away from that usable past is to break away from the moorings of civilization itself—and to drift unpiloted not toward the good society of our dreams but toward the “Brave New World” of our nightmares.

It is not only innovation which cannot be regarded as a panacea for our problems. Education itself must not be burdened with unreasonable demands and expectations. It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of the schools, and especially of the universities, in the future conduct of our civilization; but it would not be at all difficult to overestimate their capacities and resources. As far back as a decade ago Dr. John W. Gardner, then president of the Carnegie Corporation and since Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the Johnson Administration, could declare: “The role of the universities is undergoing a remarkable change. They are thrust into a position of great responsibility in our society—a position more central, more prominent, more crucial to the life of the society than academic people ever dreamed possible . . .” Indeed, it is this explosive growth of the American college system which Professors Jencks and Riesman have designated the “academic revolution”—and which they describe in their magisterial volume in tones fraught at least as much with concern and apprehension as with optimism and affirmation. Just as the lower schools cannot be all things to all children, so the universities cannot be all things to all men. In short, to avoid falling into pandemonium we must avoid falling back upon panaceas. In the allocation of roles and values to the educational enterprise, we shall need to keep our heads and maintain our balance—in more ways than the one under discussion in this panel. If it is important to strike a balance between the forces of innovation and those of tradition, it is equally vital to balance the values of a general or liberal education against those of vocational and professional training. And most crucial of all may be the need to balance the esthetic and moral persuasions of the “soft” humanities against the aggressive imperatives of the “hard” sciences. Let us admit that there is no imminent danger of our neglecting or disparaging the latter. Between Sputnik I and Apollo

11, little more than a decade apart, we have thoroughly redirected and rededicated our educational investment toward the advancement of science and the nurture of its technological progeny. I have no desire to minimize the magnificent accomplishments which have resulted from that national decision. The proof, after all, is in the pudding—or, rather, the proof is written on the moon and stars. But possibly the time has arrived for a reassessment of educational priorities and of the social values that undergird them. As we rocket down the skyways and spaceways of the future, let us not forget what the year 1984 conjured up in the mind of one sensitive futurologist—the British author George Orwell. It was a vision of hell in the shape of a technological paradise. It was the anticipation of a future society which had lost its head, its nerve, and its soul. That imaginary civilization failed, not for lack of innovation or of information—not for lack of scientific and technical skills or of psychological knowledge—but for lack of belief in the values and requirements of free men. Its failure, in a word, was educational.

I cannot leave this issue without a brief extension of my remarks in a particular direction. In all that I have said thus far I have, perhaps, been guilty of perpetuating the favored illusion of schoolmasters, that education is a strictly formal affair confined to primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions—and to the span of years between five and twenty-one—after which it vanishes like the Cheshire Cat, leaving only a bad taste and a wry grin behind. That assumption is, of course, pedantic poppycock. Education is merely learning, intellectual or cognitive growth, and it proceeds continuously in one form or another from cradle to grave. Much of this lifelong process is, to be sure, what Paul Goodman has labeled “mis-education” and others have termed “negative learning”—a good deal of which takes place in unstructured settings (such as watching TV) and even in unwitting or unconscious circumstances (such as watching TV commercials). Learning of a more active kind occurs in other situations, which are wholly or partially non-academic and extra-curricular, but which function as extensions of the academy—“classrooms without walls”, as it were. Many of these settings are sufficiently well known to need no mention; but there are others, close to my own experience, which are germane to our theme of educational innovation. Perhaps the most far-reaching example of informal education today, involving millions of Americans, is to be found in the vast array of public aids and services aimed at the disabled, disadvantaged, and deprived. Not all of these services of course entail the transmission of new learning; but it is remarkable how many of them do, and in how many ways. Here are a few: vocational rehabilitation, vocational education, compensatory education, counseling and guidance, self-support and self-care, group therapy and sensitivity training, apprenticeship and internship programs, Vista, Manpower Development and Training, Youth Corps, Head Start, Upward Bound, orientation and adjustment services, and so on and on.

In these proliferating programs of quasi-educational impact, already almost more in number than anyone can tabulate, there is continuous innovation—and that is doubtless to the good. But there is also continuous indoctrination—and that is presumably to the bad. If the millions of citizen-clients are not being enlightened by these services, they are unquestionably being influenced; and I wish only to suggest that we might do well to ponder the quality and direction of that educative influence.

As someone has surely said before me: when tyranny comes to America, it is likely to



come in the guise of “services”.

I can do no better, in bringing my remarks to an end, than to offer you a quotation from a small book which has meant much to me, and perhaps also to some of you—The Prophet, by Kahlil Gibran:

Then said a teacher, Speak to us of Teaching.

And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.

If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FAIR HOUSING FOR THE BLIND

In 1968 the California Legislature, at the behest of the California Council of the Blind, adopted the Model White Cane Law. However, so many complaints from blind persons continued to be made concerning discrimination against the blind in housing that the Council went back to the Legislature in 1969 and secured the enactment of the following measure, which could well be called the Fair Housing for the Blind Bill. Other state affiliates may wish to seek similar legislation.

Section 54.1 (b) of the Civil Code:

Blind persons, visually handicapped persons, and other physically disabled persons shall be entitled to full and equal access, as other members of the general public, to all housing accommodations offered for rent, lease, or compensation in this state, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law, or state or federal regulation, and applicable alike to all persons.

“Housing accommodations” means any real property, or portion thereof, which is used or occupied, or is intended, arranged, or designed to be used or occupied, as the home, residence, or sleeping place of one or more human beings, but shall not include any accommodations included within subdivision (a) or any single family residence the occupants of which rent, lease, or furnish for compensation not more than one room therein.

Nothing in this subdivision shall require any person renting, leasing or providing for

compensation real property to modify his property in any way or provide a higher degree of care for a blind person, visually handicapped person, or other physically disabled person than for a person who is not physically disabled.

Nothing in this part shall require any person renting, leasing, or providing for compensation real property, if such person refuses to accept tenants who have dogs, to accept as a tenant a blind person, visually handicapped person, or other physically disabled person who has a dog, including a guide dog.

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NO ROOM  
by  
Clayton Fox

[Reprinted by permission from The Olympian, Olympia, Washington]

Her name is Jan. She is nineteen years old. She is blind. Nineteen is an age for dreams. For ambition—even if you are blind. Maybe especially if you are blind. A short time ago Jan acquired Heidi. Heidi is a small, sweet, quiet German Shepherd. She was trained at the famed Seeing Eye Institute in New Jersey.

Jan's ambition is to become a medical records typist. Two other blind girls, Cathy Wilton at the Memorial Clinic and Evelyn Rendon at St. Peter Hospital, do this work. They trained at Olympia Vocational Technical Institute. Jan wanted to, too. She came to Olympia to attend OVTI. She had to have a place to live. She and Heidi. All day, Jan, Heidi and Margaret Stilwell, who was to be Jan's instructor at OVTI, looked for a place to live.

Some landlords don't want blind people—they fear they will set the place on fire. Some don't want dogs, even so special a one as a Seeing Eye dog. The other tenants might complain. It's understandable, landlords have a lot of money tied up in rental units.

Anyway, there was no place in Olympia for Jan and Heidi. They went back to Seattle.

There was no room for them in Olympia.

Nobody even offered them a stable.

But then, maybe there aren't any stables left.

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MARYLAND CONVENTION  
by  
Doris Samuels

[Editor's Note: Doris Samuels is the associate editor of the Braille Spectator.]

The Free State Federation of the Blind Maryland affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind held its third annual convention in Baltimore, at the Statler Hilton Hotel, on October 10, 11 and 12, under the very able chairmanship of Ned Graham. Our theme was "Equality, Opportunity and Security for the Blind of our State and our Nation." After registration on Friday evening, the Executive Board met to conduct the business brought before it by the representatives of the six affiliated chapters. A constitutional amendment was proposed and passed with proper process, to wit: that state officers shall be elected at the Convention each year, and that each chapter represented on the Board shall elect one Board member to serve a one year term. The following resolution was passed unanimously: that convention expenses accrued by the convention chairman and the state president shall be absorbed by the Board. Immediately after the meeting Free State members and their families adjourned to the hospitality suite for warmth and fellowship and a bit of friendly libation.

The Saturday morning session was called to order at 9 a.m. and after the invocation, Free Staters were welcomed by State President John McCraw, who then introduced the Mayor of Baltimore City. Perry Sundquist, Editor of the Braille Monitor, presented a meaningful and informative report dealing with the laws of the state pertinent to its blind citizens, and the fragmentation of services offered to the blind, under the auspices of the state. He strongly urged that we extend ourselves to secure the passage of the Model White Cane Law, and further, to strive for the creation of the Commission for the Blind. He pledged assistance necessary to achieve these goals. Mr. M. Eugene Spurrier, Assistant Supervisor of Services for the Blind, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation outlined services offered to the blind by his agency, and explained the area of administration germane to each service. He touched upon the expansion of the workshop program and informed us that a new workshop has been opened in Salisbury. Additional services will soon be forthcoming via the Montebello Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center to be opened and administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Mr. Ed Binder, Assistant Director of the Bureau of Disability Insurance, Social Security Administration, reported on the Social Security rules and regulations pertaining to blind people, and opined that H.R. 3782 would be passed by the 91st Congress. Mr. Jerome Brooks, Personnel Counsellor, Maryland Workshop for the Blind, presented a statistical report of the workshop operation. The resolution brought before the Executive Board on the previous night (convention expenses) was then read and after due process, passed.

The afternoon session opened with the report by Anne Reed, Specialist on Disability and Employment Problems in the Division of Adult Services and Medical Care in the State Department of Social Services, pertinent to the welfare program for the blind of Maryland. Mr. Larry Aaronson, Management Assistant Officer, Small Business Administration, explained the opportunity's pitfalls and hazards which might be encountered by the blind

desirous of opening small business, assisted by government loans. Mr. John Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office, National Federation of the Blind, and Mr. Perry Sundquist, expounded upon "Federationism", after which audience participation was invited, and much spirited discussion ensued, as it had throughout the session. John McCraw presented the presidential report dealing primarily with strides made and goals still to be achieved, apropos membership in Maryland, highlighting the formation of the Cumberland and Anne Arundel Chapters, and the consolidation of the Chester River Chapter and other splinter groups on the eastern shore of Maryland into one chapter. Chapter reports, prepared and presented by members of each of the six chapters, followed and the convention session was adjourned.

The annual banquet was spiked with the wit and humor of Master of Ceremonies John McCraw, and enhanced by a good dinner. Piece-de-resistance was provided by John Nagle. Mr. Nagle's speech was moving, to say the least, and inspiring to everyone within the sound of his voice. Charters were presented to the Greater Cumberland and Anne Arundel County Chapters, and a plaque to Mr. Nagle for his dedicated services to the FSFB. Of course, hospitality flowed after the banquet until almost dawn.

Sunday morning 9 a.m. session of the convention saw many sleepy but steadfast conventioners in attendance. The session was opened by Ned Graham, and the invocation offered. John Nagle presented a report on national legislation and Allen Schlank a report on state legislation, of interest to the blind. The convention then applied itself to the business meeting, and after the treasurer's report, the following officers were elected: President, John McCraw; First Vice President, Ned Graham Second Vice President, Roger Peterson; Secretary, Doris Samuels; Treasurer, Allen Schlank; Convention Delegate, John McCraw; Alternate Delegate, Billie Ruth Schlank. The locale of next year's convention will be Annapolis.

The Mid-Atlantic Federation of the Blind Student Division met immediately following the adjournment of the convention proper. However, it was very poorly attended and the feasibility of future convention participation for this division will be decided at their spring meeting.

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MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--JAMES COURTS;  
AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--KANSAS



After losing his sight in January of 1942, due to a detached retina, James Courts worked in real estate; then was employed by North American Aviation until 1945.

Also in 1942, Jim became active in the organized blind movement, serving on the Board of the Kansas Association of the Blind for fourteen years, and was vice-president. In 1954 he was appointed to the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped; and subsequently was recipient of a citation in 1959 from Governor George Docking. Jim found a number of jobs for blind persons; and was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Workshop for the Blind in 1953. For his outstanding service to blind persons, he was presented the Perrin D. McElroy Award in 1968 by the Progressive Blind of Missouri at their annual convention.

Active in other organizations as well, Jim is past Noble Grand of IOOF Lodge 484 in Kansas City, Kansas, as well as past president of the Stockyards Lions Club. Active in organized labor before loss of sight, he has never lost contact in this field.

Jim is now working with his fourth Seeing Eye dog, named Elly. He hires a driver; and has been making routine calls around the Kansas City area for twenty-four years, selling office equipment and business machines.

Kansas had been an affiliate of the NFB for a number of years, but since the division in 1961, Jim had felt the need of a new Kansas organization.

The story of the preliminary groundwork for establishing our new affiliate is well told in the Monitor, January, 1969.

On November 23, 1968, Jim's dream became a reality when the Sunflower Federation of the Blind was born. An organizational convention was held at the Town House in Kansas City, Kansas, with NFB President Kenneth Jernigan presiding. A constitution was adopted; and state officers and board members were elected. We were then the thirty-ninth affiliate of the NFB!

Fundraising projects have consisted of sales of pens and candy, which earned for us a profit of nearly \$1600.

A service project is the collection of eyeglasses to send to Pakistan; also, we are sending typewriters to Indonesia and to Malawi in Central Africa.

We now have two local chapters--the Kansas United Workers of the Blind, whose president is James Stewart; and the Johnson County Chapter, whose president is Raymond Graber. Also, we have members-at-large throughout the state of Kansas. At the present time we are forming a student group.

We are proud of our new organization for we feel that it has much potential to improve in the state of Kansas the social and economic status of our blind.

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#### CONVENTION CAPSULE

by

Russell Kletzing

[Editor's Note: The articles which follow are reports of activities of the representatives of the National Federation of the Blind in connection with the International Federation of the Blind Convention which took place in Colombo, Ceylon in October.]

The first world convention of The International Federation of the Blind was successful far beyond what most of us had hoped. About sixty-five attended from overseas representing twenty-seven countries. After adding the participants from Ceylon, more than one hundred were in attendance at the convention.

The convention was held for four days from the 1st through the 4th of October at the Galle Face Hotel in Colombo, Ceylon. The hospitality extended by the All-Ceylon Union of the Blind and its many friends was nothing short of spectacular. Delegates were met at ship or airport. Nearly all the delegates had an opportunity to have dinner with a Ceylonese



family. Drivers, guides for shopping, and many other helpful services were provided to the foreign visitors. All of this was done with the utmost warmth and friendliness.

A case in point was the interpreter for the Japanese delegation. A Ceylonese manufacturer who had spent several years in Japan learning ceramics engineering devoted four days to interpreting for the three delegates from Japan despite the fact that in two months his new ceramic tile factory was scheduled for opening.

Distinguished guests at the convention included the Prime Minister, the Minister of State, and the President of Ceylon. The Governor General, the President of the Senate, the Chief Justice, and the Mayor of Colombo were among the other distinguished dignitaries who greeted the delegates or attended convention sessions. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barnett of the American Foundation for the Blind, U.S.A., were among the guests at the convention banquet.

### Papers and Panel Discussions

Most of the convention's program was in the form of panels or the presentation of papers followed by full discussion. All those in attendance were entitled to participate fully in the proceedings, and nearly all did. The discussions were characterized by clear thinking, openness, and a free exchange of ideas.

Andre Nicolle of France presented a thorough analysis of the variations in the definition of blindness in countries throughout the world. Hugh Jeffrey of Australia led the discussion that followed the paper. There was unanimous agreement that much confusion would be eliminated if there were a single universal definition of blindness, but that insufficient information was available as yet to determine what the definition should be or what definition could gain world acceptance. M. Nicolle's recommendation that a commission be established under the auspices of The International Federation of the Blind and the World Health Organization to develop and recommend an appropriate definition of blindness was embodied in a resolution which was adopted later.

Dr. Horst Geissler of Germany presented the report of the Committee on Employment of the Blind. He reviewed legislative measures that have been enacted in a number of countries to promote employment of the physically handicapped, including the blind. These are generally of two types—laws which require the employment of a certain percentage of blind and handicapped persons and laws which provide training and rehabilitation of the blind. Also, some countries have specific preferences for the blind in particular occupations such as telephony. The report concluded that legislation requiring that a quota of blind people be employed in industry had been quite successful in many countries especially where there was a good training and rehabilitation program as well. The discussion, which was led by Ishfaq Siddiqi of Pakistan, was one of the most spirited of the convention. It was pointed out that legislation would not by itself do much to increase the employment of the blind. It would have to be coupled with extensive education of employers as to the capabilities of potential blind employees. Several in the developing countries expressed the view that a legislative requirement for the employment of the blind in industry would strengthen their efforts in this area even though full compliance might not be obtainable for

some time. A strong resolution was adopted urging governments to establish quotas for the employment of the disabled including the blind, and facilities to train blind persons; it also proposed that we enlist the aid of the International Labor Organization to make employment of the blind a part of its program as a matter of urgency.

Mr. Tom Parker of the United Kingdom presented a report concerning customs charges on books and appliances for the blind. Although there seems to be no problem at present with braille books, there are constant problems in a number of different countries which assess import duties on appliances necessary for the blind such as braille watches, braille paper, typewriters, tape recorders and other items. In the discussion which was led by Leonard de Wulf of Belgium it was brought out that the assessment of duty varied from country to country and also with regard to a particular country. Sometimes the tariffs exceed the cost of the item, while at other times a reasonable customs agent can be induced to waive the tariff entirely on equipment for a blind person or institution. The convention resolved to pursue a strong policy of eliminating all customs barriers on these appliances. The discussions also brought out that some of the appliances are expensive and that it is difficult for developing countries to obtain foreign exchange for their purchase. The convention recommended that those countries which provide economic assistance to developing countries should be urged to subsidize part of the cost of appliances for the blind which they manufacture.

Russell Kletzing of the United States was the moderator of a panel discussion on the relationship of the blind to other organizations of the handicapped in achieving social progress. The discussion brought out that in some countries the blind had remained entirely separate from all other handicapped groups, while in some others they have merged into a larger organization covering all handicaps. Most countries fall between these extremes. In England, the National League of the Blind has included workers with other handicaps in its organization to prevent employers from using such workers to downgrade wages or to replace blind workers. The opinion was expressed that the objectives of the blind might be overlooked if they were to completely merge with an organization including all handicapped persons, since the number of the blind would be a relatively small part of the total. A somewhat parallel situation was identified in which services for the blind have almost always suffered when they are handled together with services for all of the disabled. In the United States the blind have often pioneered in obtaining services which were later extended to other disabled groups. The conclusion was that the situation would vary in different countries, but that at a minimum active cooperation between organizations of the blind and organizations of other disabled persons was desirable.

General Aramis Ammannato of Italy led a brisk panel discussion concerning the relationship of The International Federation of the Blind to the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. Some of the points that were brought out were that the relationship of the I.F.B. and the W.C.W.B. should be one of equality between two international organizations. Also, the members of the I.F.B. should do everything possible to insure that organizations of the blind receive adequate representation in the W.C.W.B. This problem is illustrated by the situation in Australia where the Society for the Blind selects both delegates for the Council and the Organization of the Blind has no representation. A resolution was adopted taking a position that organizations of the blind should have

adequate representation on international, national and local levels.

Achille Dyckmans of Belgium chaired a panel discussion which focused on the degree of independence from government control that should be required for I.F.B. membership. It was pointed out that in some countries the organization of the blind is, in effect, a government agency which implements governmental policies. One view expressed was that the I.F.B. must admit affiliates from countries where there is a substantial amount of government control if it is to grow and be representative of blind people throughout the world. The other view expressed was that the organizations in some countries had only the form of organizations of blind people and that the blind members had little or no control over them; therefore, these would not meet the requirements of the I.F.B. Constitution requiring that affiliates be organizations of the blind. No final conclusions were reached. When an organization seeks affiliation where there is substantial government control, it will be necessary for the Executive Committee to make a decision.

Eligibility for membership in the I.F.B. of organizations which exclude some classes of blind people was the subject of a panel discussion led by Dr. Fatima Shah of Pakistan. There was overwhelming support for the view that no I.F.B. affiliate could limit its membership on racial or religious grounds. Some suggested, however, that qualifications for membership in an organization such as education or employment might be necessary, particularly in newly organized associations of the blind. A cautionary note was expressed lest such limitations lead to an undemocratic organization.

A paper dealing with the subject of relationships of organizations of the blind to societies for the blind was presented by Dr. Isabelle Grant of the United States. The discussion which followed was led by Dirk Koster of The Netherlands. Dr. Grant expressed the view that we should keep organizations of the blind separate from societies for the blind and, in particular, avoid domination by such societies. A contrary view, however, was expressed. Using some European countries and New Zealand as illustrations, it was pointed out that it was possible for organizations of the blind and societies for the blind to work cooperatively with mutual respect.

Russell Kletzing of the United States presented a paper entitled "The White Cane Around the World". It was based on research done by the late Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, founder and first president of the I.F.B. It reviewed the widely varying laws and practices concerning the use of white canes and guide dogs in different countries. It also included a model law which could be used as a guide by a country, province, or city which lacked a white cane law or had a law that needed improvement. A resolution was adopted urging each affiliate to review its travel laws for the blind with a view to assuring that they meet the full needs of their citizens.

Mr. Rienzi Alagiyawanna of Ceylon presented the report of the Committee on Education of the Blind. He reviewed problems in educating blind children, particularly in Asia and Africa. It appears that most countries do not require compulsory education of blind children. A resolution was adopted enlisting the aid of UNESCO in urging governments to require compulsory education of blind children.

## Growth and Progress

The Executive Committee held meetings before and after the convention. Several meetings were also held in New Delhi for those who were able to attend. All of these meetings were devoted primarily to organizational matters and plans for the future.

Six new affiliates joined the I.F.B. during the convention and became charter members. These were Canada, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iran, Korea, and Saudi Arabia. This raises the total membership of the I.F.B. to twenty-five nations.

During the convention, President Alagiyawanna reported on the growth of the I.F.B. since its inception five years ago. He set as a goal that we should try to double our membership within the next five years. He pointed out the great need that blind people throughout the world have felt for an international organization that represented them and permitted united action by them.

At the Executive Committee meetings there was considerable discussion of the need for additional finances. It was pointed out that currency restrictions prevented funds from being sent out of some countries, but the contributions to the I.F.B. could be kept in a bank within the country. Three organizations of the blind in India pledged a total of sixteen hundred rupees for the Federation. It was also urged that more countries follow the practice of sending packages of handicrafts for sale in western countries for the benefit of the Federation treasury and to meet their dues.

The excellent resolutions written by the committee under the chairmanship of Tom Parker and adopted by the convention were also discussed by the Executive Committee. All considered it extremely important that the I.F.B. proceed to take firm and definite action on these resolutions. A two-pronged approach was decided upon. The Secretary-General would contact the United Nations and its affiliated organizations to seek implementation of the resolutions. Concurrently, our affiliate in each country would contact its own government to obtain support of its foreign ministry and United Nations delegation for the same goals.

There was a lengthy discussion as to the name that should be given to the I.F.B.'s semi-annual publication. After many suggestions, the decision was left to the editor, Dirk Koster.

Mr. Hugh Jeffrey of Australia prepared a "Charter for the Blind of the World". Its general principles were strongly endorsed by the Executive Committee, but time did not permit detailed consideration. It was distributed to delegates and observers at the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind in New Delhi.

The question of electing honorary members came up on the last day of the convention. It became apparent that a great many of the delegations had an honorary member to nominate. A motion was adopted providing that such a nomination should be sent to the Secretary-General, 4604 Briarwood Drive, Sacramento, California 95821, with an explanation of the reasons for the nomination. All such nominations then would be



submitted to the Executive Committee for a mail ballot. Nominations should be received by February 1, 1970.

## Elections

Mr. Cyril White of New Zealand served as chairman of the Nominating Committee. The names and addresses of the newly elected officers and members of the Executive Committee are listed at the end of this report.

## Social Activities

No effort was spared to insure that the delegates would enjoy themselves while in Colombo. On the eve of the convention, the Mayor of Colombo gave a formal reception at the Galle Face Hotel. The convention banquet itself had to be hastily converted into a deluxe buffet since some of the waiters at the hotel were on strike. Fortunately, however, the cooks were not, and the continental and Ceylonese cuisine was memorable. The absence of waiters did not keep anybody from eating his fill. On Friday following the convention adjournment, many of the delegates were invited for tea or cocktails at their embassies. The Pakistan High Commission invited delegates from every country who were not otherwise occupied to a gala reception there.

Saturday was the day of recreation. The delegates got up early to journey to a coconut grove on the estate of Sir John Kotalawala. Refreshments appeared on arrival, as did singers and dancers in authentic costume. Apropos of authentic costumes, earlier in the week Ed Foohey of Canada and Tom Parker arranged to be fitted for Ceylon's "native dress". These costumes were tailored within a few hours at prices that were fantastically low by western standards. Meanwhile, back at the coconut grove a young elephant had arrived. Quite a few delegates had elephant rides, bareback and three at a time.

The visit to the zoo that followed was not the ordinary "people on one side of the fence--animals on the other" kind of thing. Snakes and other animals passed among the braver delegates. Lunch was served, followed by shopping for Ceylonese handicrafts. The festivities were concluded on Saturday evening with a reception at the Royal College Hall by the Chief Justice of Ceylon

Thirty-nine of the delegates arose at four o'clock Sunday morning to take a charter flight to Madras and New Delhi.

The following persons were elected for five-year terms: President, Rienzi Alagiyawanna, Ceylon; First Vice President, Fatima Shah, Pakistan; Second Vice President, Horst Geissler, Germany; Third Vice President, Getachew Desta, Ethiopia; Secretary General, Russell Kletzing, United States; Treasurer, Isabelle Grant, United States. Members at Large elected were: Aramis Ammannato, Italy; Hugo Garcilazo, Argentina; Hugh Jeffrey, Australia; Masahiro Muratani, Japan; Jason Mutugi, Kenya; Tom Parker, United Kingdom; Andre Nicolle, France; Ishfaq Siddiqi, Pakistan; Rajendra Vyas, India. Dirk Koster, Netherlands, was elected Ex-Officio Member.

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE  
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND CONVENTION

Resolution No. 1—Uniform Definition of Blindness

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That the World Health Organisation be urged to set up an international commission to study the problem of establishing a uniform definition of blindness in conjunction with The International Federation of the Blind.

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Resolution No. 2—Employment of the Blind

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

1. That where no such provision exists, governments be urged to introduce legislation designed to compel employers to employ a quota of disabled persons including the blind, such quota to be determined by each government.
2. That governments be urged to establish government training centres for the purpose of training such persons for employment.
3. That the International Labour Organisation be urged to deal with employment of the blind as a matter of urgency.

\* \* \* \* \*

Resolution No. 3—Customs Charges on Articles, Appliances and Other Equipment Needed by the Blind

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That the Secretary-General of the United Nations be requested to arrange for the General Assembly of that body to consider the problems being experienced by blind persons in many parts of the world, with a view to recommending that all governments abolish all customs charges on articles for the blind and such other articles, appliances or equipment deemed to be necessary for the blind, the latter to be certified as being necessary by an organization of the blind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Resolution No. 4—Prices of Equipment Needed by the Blind

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;



That organisations of the blind in countries producing equipment for the blind be asked to urge their governments to allocate a proportion of the aid furnished to the developing countries for the specific purpose of subsidising the provision of articles, appliances or equipment needed by the blind people in such developing countries.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Resolution No. 5--Representation of the Blind

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That we demand representation of the organised blind on all bodies, international or national, which deal with or are set up to deal with blind welfare or any other matters concerning the blind.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Resolution No. 6- Statistics Relating to the Number of Blind Persons in the World

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That the World Health Organisation be requested to take such steps as are necessary to carry out a complete survey with a view to ascertaining the approximate number of blind persons in each country.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Resolution No. 7--Scholarships

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That The International Federation of the Blind institute five post-graduate scholarships for the following purposes to be distributed in the following manner:

1. Two scholarships to be awarded to two blind members of national organisations of the blind for outstanding services rendered for the blind, one from the developing countries and the other from a developed country. The purpose of this scholarship is to provide training to these persons so that they may acquire further knowledge as to how they may further serve the blind.
2. Two scholarships to be awarded to two outstanding individual blind students, one from the developing countries and one from the developed countries. The purpose is to give them the opportunity to specialise in their individual field of study.
3. One research scholarship to be awarded to a blind member of a national organisation of the blind to enable him to investigate the problems pertaining to the education, employment and rehabilitation of the blind.

That The International Federation of the Blind shall set up an ad hoc committee for the purpose of selecting the eligible candidates.

That the venue for the study shall be a university in the country of the applicant, or in any other country if circumstances necessitate. If the university is in a country other than that of the applicant, the scholarship should include cost of transportation, tuition and maintenance.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Resolution No. 8- The White Cane Law

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

1. That the right of the blind to travel freely is necessary for the enjoyment of normal life. A white stick is one of the established methods of such travel.

2. That it is recommended that each member review its national and local laws concerning the white stick and enact or improve such laws to the extent necessary. The Model White Cane Law should be used as a guide to the establishment of the rights of the blind and the disabled.

3. That it is recommended that each affiliate endeavour to have October 15 of each year designated as "White Cane Safety Day" in order to publicise the use of the white stick and the capabilities of the blind.

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#### Resolution No. 9-Compulsory Education of the Blind

BE IT RESOLVED by the Convention of The International Federation of the Blind;

That UNESCO be urged to use its influence to persuade all governments to adopt compulsory education of the blind as a basic right.

That the Executive Committee of The International Federation of the Blind be instructed to take whatever steps it thinks necessary to improve the standards in the education of blind children so that they attain parity with the sighted children.

\* \* \* \* \*

## POST CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

by

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

Choosing to route my homewardbound journey via East and West Africa brought me into nations which I had not visited previously and meeting other blind people for the first time.

My first new country to visit was Tanzania, where in the capital, Dar es Salam, I was guest of the Commissioner for Social Welfare and Services, Mr. Mwangosi, who facilitated my meeting with members of the Union of the Blind and with several officers from the Departments of Education and Social Welfare, Mr. Musliwa, Mr. Mabula and Mr. Rachim. The highlight of my Tanzanian experience was my meeting with this group of young blind men, all of them interested in what was happening in Colombo, for they had heard the report we made over the international radios regarding the meetings of the Convention. To me personally, this was an exciting experience, to realize that our efforts in Ceylon in publicizing the Convention were really effective. Mobility, the White Cane, Employment, Education and Higher Education were among the topics discussed, in spite of the fact that only a few spoke English well enough to take the floor, but all understood what was said and spoke in their native Swahili, which was interpreted for me. These young men wanted to know how to become members of the I.F.B. A very informative souvenir of Tanzania is a tape which I made with two of the leaders, Mr. Nakalama who was a telephonist and Mr. Samson, who worked in a factory, the only blind man thus employed in Dar es Salam. Mobility gave Mr. Samson no problem, though he was intensely interested in the use of the White Cane and its implications.

A brief visit to three schools with Mr. Mabula gave me an idea of primary education in Dar es Salam as well as affording a discussion of the integrated program of education as initiated in Tanzania. Mr. Mwangosi arranged for a special newspaper report of a meeting of all social welfare organizations. A group of approximately one hundred interested people met together for a full hour's discussion of blindness in general in today's society and in particular, the present world movement of the blind speaking for themselves through organization.

The feature of my one day visit to Kenya was making contact with members of the Kenya Union of the Blind and receiving a copy of the newspaper publicity given the delegate, Tom Muchiri on his return from Ceylon. The article is excellent with a picture of Tom and his wife, surrounded by many friends, blind and sighted at the airport. His arrival, the broad smile on Tom's face, his gala hat, and his obvious satisfaction from the Ceylon trip, was wholesome publicity for our Colombo Convention, as well as for the cause of the organized blind.

A visit to Kampala, Uganda was next on my itinerary and my first visit to the Salama Training Center for the Blind, started in 1952 by the late Sir Clutha Mackenzie with the support of the United Nations. Salama offers a twelve to fifteen month's training in agriculture, for indeed, that is the backbone of employment in Uganda. I felt the program,

under the leadership of Mr. E. Bisasi, so thorough, that it merited a place in the education of each and every blind youth academic or otherwise in Uganda. To date about six hundred trainees have received this training, and many are resettled on the land, tilling the soil of their native village, or keeping pigs, poultry or a cow for the production of food. The trainees initiated me into their ways of crop and fruit growing. One young man, for the average age was twenty-three, wanted to have pamphlets on citrus growing; another on orchid growing. Another wanted to know how she would get training for telephony after her experience at the agriculture training center here at Salama. She, Jacinto, was an unusually bright young woman, with ideas for her own progress. We found that there was a trained telephonist at the local university-college switchboard. A visit to Mr. John Isingwoma at his place of work, and an interview with him showed possibilities for his training some of the young enthusiasts, without their having to go overseas for their training. This all too recurrent idea that one had to go abroad for a specific training, when money for this outlay was definitely not available, caused me to look around and evaluate existing local situations. Here was a local possibility for telephony training, and there was still another for anyone interested in physical therapy. Two of the trainees would like to get in touch with American farmers to compare notes, receive pamphlets, and strike up friendships with their overseas fellow blind. I have names and addresses of these.

As a result of our three session conferences, these trainees came up with two basic needs that should be easily met, and which would completely broaden their point of view. They need typewriters to communicate with sighted people for their means of communication was restricted to braille. I put into writing a suggestion to the President of the local Society for the Blind, to investigate Peace Corps possibilities. My experience with a similar situation in Morocco helped me with this solution. They wish to break down barriers of isolationism in their own lives, for as in so many other countries, blindness is a distinctly isolating and segregating factor in itself.

The second immediate need is for white canes, for they too want to move freely in downtown Kampala, and they want the government or legal protection which could come with the adoption of the White Cane Law. They were all most keen to learn about the Colombo Convention for they had already heard about it by announcement, however, they were unable to send delegates for financial reasons. The obvious decision was to form into an organization of the blind, with their blind co-workers as officers, submit an application to the I.F.B. and at the same time submit a copy of their constitution. It was as simple as that and the suggestion received the unanimous approval of the thirty-three trainees and Mr. Isingwoma.

Overnight in Accra, Ghana consisted of a visit with Mrs. Christine Simango, Director of the Ghana Society for the Blind, who was instrumental with the backing of the government in seeing that Mr. S. A. Holm attended the Colombo Convention. It was a treat to recount with S. A. the events of Colombo, our accomplishments, our frustrations usually involving expenses, and our fun. This young blind man, a secretary in the Department of Social Welfare and Community Planning, is indeed a potential leader, looking forward to making public appearances on behalf of the blind, and interpreting to his fellow Ghanaians, blind and sighted alike, a new philosophy regarding Opportunity, Equality, and Security for the blind of his nation.

My fifth visit in East and West Africa was new territory for me; Sierra Leone with its capital at Freetown. Mr. Sam Campbell, the young, blind, energetic and brilliant headmaster of the local school for the blind, the only blind school in Sierra Leone, should have been in Ceylon attending this convention. Finances did not permit his coming unfortunately. Traveling under his own steam, Sam has studied education in England, attended a I.C.E.B.Y. conference in the U.S.A., is a musician, composer and pianist, creative and enterprising on behalf of the pupils who pass through his school.

There is no post school training available. With the help of one of the instructors and Sam's innate creativity, several of the postgraduates of the school formed their own band with drums, electric organ, electric guitars and many local instruments, so that now the team plays at local dances, picnics, and festivals, giving to each of the team at least a livelihood, if not a rich one, and some pocket money. One young man is studying to be a teacher in the local university, and is making satisfactory progress in spite of the handicap of lack of books and appliances. When I saw what these serious-minded, dedicated, earnest, but deprived students were doing I wondered if we could not share some of our materials with them, for indeed blind people do need these tools to help them along. The team entertained me with two of their band concerts, one in which all of us, about thirty from the school participated in the dancing to their stirring West African music, and the other performance in which they made a tape of some of their own compositions on my behalf.

To my surprise, following a brief interview with the President and with the General Secretary of the Sierra Leone Society for the Blind which had government recognition, I found that there was no blind member on the Board. The young blind adults were asking for representation, and in lieu, had decided that membership in the I.F.B. would promote the interests of their national blind, and that such an organization of the blind, speaking for themselves, and making known their needs with practical suggestions for their fulfillment, could only be in the interests of and for the promotion of the welfare of their fellow blind. We shall be happy to lend the helping hand towards this end, as they have requested.

Elated over these five visits through Africa to add to my previous experiences in this vast continent, I was exhausted knowing that still twenty hours or so of flying time faced me before reaching the Pacific coast from Senegal. I embarked on the first lap, spending eight sleepless hours in the Transatlantic portion of the journey and arriving in New York at 3 a.m. One stop at Chicago, another five hours, and I was back home in sunny California; back to my own bed and board, and telephone with a mountain of work facing me, and loads of goodwill, friendships, and experiences to share with my fellow blind at home and abroad. Arrivederci!

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## HOW TO WRITE EFFECTIVELY TO CONGRESS

by  
Willard Clopton, Jr.

[Reprinted with permission from the Des Moines (Iowa) Register]

Writing your congressman can be a pretty meaningless exercise if it's done the wrong way. If it's done right, it can be a valuable part of the legislative process.

Representative Morris K. Udall (Democrat, Arizona) who among other things has been an Air Force captain and a pro basketball player and is now chairman of the House subcommittee that deals with civil service pay, recently put together a list of "do's" and "don'ts" for his prospective correspondents. The suggestions were aimed at his own folks back home, but they make good advice for constituents anywhere.

First of all, he says, address the letter correctly. Send it to Honorable Joe Smith, House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515 (or if to a senator, the Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510). This may sound pretty basic, but the congressman once got one that began: "Mr. Morris K. Udall, U. S. Senator, Capitol Building, Phoenix, Arizona."

Identify the bill you're writing about. About 20,000 are introduced each year. If you don't know its number, give some description such as "Truth in Lending".

Write in time to do some good. Often a bill is out of committee or has already passed the House before a congressman receives your helpful ideas.

Don't bother writing any representatives or senators but your own.

Your letter will probably have greater impact if it's kept reasonably brief. Don't worry about grammar, spelling or form. It needn't be typed--merely legible.

Give your own views. A personal letter is more valuable than a signature on a petition. Give reasons for your position. Phrases like "I'm bitterly opposed" don't help much, unless you go on to say, "H.R. 100 will put small dealers like me out of business."

If you have specialized knowledge on some issue, by all means write. A congressman is a layman on most matters and is always glad to know what the experts think.

Be constructive. Don't just say what's wrong with the bill. State what you think is the right way. And don't just write when you're mad. If your man votes the way you like, send him a "well done" occasionally.

Don't threaten to campaign or vote against your man if he doesn't do what you want. Such remarks, says Udall, "rarely intimidate a conscientious member, and they may generate an adverse reaction." And don't bother calling him names.



Don't pretend to have vast influence.

Don't become a constant "pen pal". Write often if you like, but be pertinent and brief.

Don't demand that he take a public stand before he has all the facts. "On major bills there usually are two sides to be considered, and you may have heard only one," says Udall.

Udall's advice is a good answer to the often-asked question, "What can one mere citizen do?" Clip and save.

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## PROGRESS FOR TEACHERS

Editor's Note: As Monitor readers well know, in too many states it is almost impossible without a court fight for fully qualified teachers who are blind to obtain jobs suited to their training and abilities, if at all. But not in all states. Here are three success stories which show that we are making some progress.

### BLIND TEACHER CONDUCTS CLASS WITH EASE, COMPETENCE

[Reprinted from the Pipestone (Minnesota) Star.]

The Pipestone Public Schools, District No. 583, have hired twenty-five new teachers this year; eighteen in elementary through high school classes and seven at the Area Vocational School.

To acquaint the public with the new teachers on the staff, the Star will publish in the coming weeks pictures of the new teachers with a short biographical sketch of each one. We begin the series with a longer, more detailed story of Mr. Gashel, as his personal qualifications and limitations are unique to the school staff.

Blindness is a handicap that James Gashel, a new teacher at Pipestone High School, minimizes and reduces to the lowest common denominator by referring to it as a physical characteristic that sets him apart only as much as a redhead in a roomful of blondes would be set apart. "What matters," says Gashel, "is one's attitude and the public's attitude toward blindness. It's only a handicap inasmuch as an individual or the public allows it to be. One develops the skills and crafts needed to work successfully in his chosen profession, like any person."

Walking at a brisk pace through the crowded halls of the high school, without any help except that of his long white cane, Gashel is on his own and conducts 7th grade English and

9th, 11th and 12th grade Speech classes with the ease and competence of a “sighted teacher”.

How does he maintain discipline, correct homework and keep “on top” of the class situation? He is confident that his discipline problems are no better or worse than any other teacher’s in the school. His theory is to prevent, as much as possible, a problem from arising by keeping his students interested in their work and busy during the class period. “It takes only a few days to know who the ‘trouble makers’ and ‘goof offs’ are,” he said. Like all teachers he takes the appropriate measures to keep a climate conducive to learning. Working at the beginning of the year with a braille seating chart of his classes, he now has the seating arrangement memorized and knows his students by their placements and by voice.

To help him with his written assignments and tests, he has a reader, Colleen Rohloff, a senior at the high school, who reads the students’ written work to him and corrects written quizzes and tests from an answer sheet prepared by him. His personal textbooks have been transcribed into braille by the Iowa Library at the Iowa Commission for the Blind in Des Moines and are on loan to him from the library.

Besides his regular English and Speech classes, Gashel will coach the debate team, expecting to travel with them to their areas of contest. He has an extensive background in debating, having been a successful debater on the team at the University of Northern Iowa, and also served as president of the campus chapter of Delta Sigma Rho Tau Kappa Alpha (a national honorary speech fraternity). While doing his “student teaching” at the Newton Community Schools in Newton, Iowa, he worked with the top forensics team in the state of Iowa.

He and His wife, Arlene, both blind since birth, live in their two bedroom mobile home at the Modern Trailer Court on 8th Avenue. Arlene does all her own housework; including the cooking, washing and ironing, cleaning, and mending. She even makes her own clothes, although confesses to having gotten “away from it” of late; however, she maintains that using a sewing machine presents no formidable problems whatsoever.

They walk all over town, having had a map of Pipestone read to them, and are confident that they can find their way anywhere they want to go. Although they call the grocery store for their week’s grocery supply and have it delivered, they often “run to the store” for the few items they forgot. For recreation they like to dance, swim, water ski and bowl, although Arlene admits she doesn’t take bowling as seriously as her husband. They are members of the Methodist Church in their home town and expect to participate in the church and its program here.

A native of Mason City, Iowa, Gashel attended the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School at Vinton, Iowa, graduating from high school in 1964. After a year’s study at Iowa Orientation Center for the Adult Blind at Des Moines, he enrolled at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, majoring in Speech and English and graduated this year.

Gashel makes it clear that he neither wants nor needs any sympathy because he is blind and asks to be judged by his students, their parents and his peers solely on his ability and

performance as a teacher and coach. It's a profession he takes pride in and one in which he feels he can make a worthwhile contribution.

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## MUSIC A LIVELY ART TO TEACHER

by

Alice Olick

[Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from the Hackensack (New Jersey) Record.]

Myrna Schmidt does not call on children because their hair is parted nicely or they wear pretty dresses. She is less likely than most teachers to play favorites with cute children. Myrna Schmidt is blind.

Miss Schmidt, Englewood's new elementary music teacher, has no need for tattle-tales in her class, regardless of how well intentioned they may be. She prefers to rely on her own keen sense of awareness developed during nine years in the classroom, rather than on Mary informing on Johnny.

Although blind since she was three months old, Miss Schmidt never had any doubt she would become a teacher. It wasn't until her last year at Fredonia College in New York, however, that she made up her mind to teach sighted children. Her friends told her she wouldn't get a job. At that time no blind teacher had ever been hired by any public school system in New York State.

"I began sending out letters of application around Christmas of my senior year," she recalls. She wrote letters and letters and letters, but always the word "blind" seemed to overshadow her other qualifications. Finally, late the following August, two weeks before school was ready to resume, she was hired as a music teacher by Shenendehowa Central School in Saratoga County, New York. She thinks back on her nine years there as a wonderfully happy experience. "I loved the school and everyone there," she said with an enthusiasm that dominates most of her conversation. But in a way, she added, she felt isolated.

When she heard about the Englewood vacancy during a visit last Memorial Day to her home in Queens, she was excited about the possibilities of living again in the metropolitan area where she had grown up. Her desire to become more involved in the problems of today—to be part of a multiethnic school system, to work more actively with New York-based organizations for the blind—convinced her to make the switch. Again she was cautioned by family and friends to stay in her familiar surroundings where she had security. "Maybe you won't get the job," she was told.

Her reply: "How will I know if I don't try." She got the job, an apartment in Fort Lee

from which she commutes by bus to school every day, and a whole new world with which to familiarize herself. "It's wonderful," she says.

Miss Schmidt is believed to be the first blind teacher to be hired by a Bergen County school district. Norman Hanner of Lodi had been a science teacher at Pascack Valley Regional High School for eight years when he became blind in 1963. He retained his teaching post, accompanied to school by his seeing-eye dog, almost to his death a year ago last May. In 1964 he was the first recipient of the annual Ralph Digman award for outstanding contributions in the field of high school earth science teaching. This year New York City hired its first blind teacher, Alexander J. Chavich, who has been assigned to a Bronx junior high school. "I don't know how many blind people are teaching in New York and New Jersey," Miss Schmidt says, "but I know there should be three times as many."

Miss Schmidt, who runs a tight ship in her classes, apportions her time among three Englewood schools, giving music instruction to elementary and special education pupils. Admittedly she cannot use the same teaching techniques a sighted person might use. "But it's important to get across to people that a blind person can develop alternative teaching methods just as effective as those used by a good sighted teacher," she emphasizes. "If you can't see, you still have ears, hands and a brain, and you can always speak," she explains.

Right now, because it's all so new, Miss Schmidt admits the children are testing her disciplinary powers. She often appoints a student assistant to recognize those who have their hands raised. The children write for her on the blackboard. When there are some students who try to take advantage of the situation, there are always others who reproach them. "And any teacher who says she doesn't have any discipline problems is kidding," asserts Miss Schmidt.

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#### STUDENTS FOLLOW SIGHTLESS TEACHER THROUGH WORLD'S HISTORIC EVENTS

[Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from the Arlington (California) Times.]

When Jodie Astrin has a problem in her seventh grade English history class, she steps up to her teacher's desk, states her name and asks for help. She just raises her hand in her other classes, but in English history she must follow this procedure because you see, Jodie's teacher is Esther Irene Salata, one of California's one hundred blind teachers.

Esther is on the La Sierra High School staff in the Alvord Unified School District. She joined the district this summer and was surprised to be so warmly received considering her handicap. Although totally sightless, she manages classes with twenty to twenty-five students. Their books are regular state texts; her's are in braille. Because she cannot do blackboard work and other necessary paper work her students elect class officers every month who perform daily attendance tasks and help keep each other in line. Because discipline is necessary to teach her students, Esther has a sort of pact with them. The very

first day of school she told them, "We all have handicaps and must learn to help each other." It's evident they're learning. "I have to depend on them and I expect them to respect me as I will them," she said.

She earned her teaching credential at Chico State College where she majored in history with a minor in speech and English. She student taught at Chico Junior High School in the seventh grade and is overjoyed because that is just the spot Alvord needed her most! Her own education started in the California School for the Blind in Berkeley, where she attended from kindergarten to the eighth grade. From there she went to Redwood City High School in Marin County and was its first blind student. After her graduation, she attended Marin Junior College for two years and from there she went to Chico, but she's not through learning yet. The young, blonde teacher has a burning desire to work with the aerospace program and all of her secondary education has been geared toward that end. Her next step is a Master's degree plus summers spent in aerospace workshops. She's already attended one of these and is delighted over a visit to one of the nation's space plants.

At home, Esther enjoys an uncomplicated life that is filled with assignment preparation and radio sports! She's an avid Dodger fan and loves the Dallas Cowboys. (She went to school with Craig Morton, Dallas quarterback, and listens for his name every time they play.)Some of Esther's young students visit her and help her with the housework, and Sherry Ennis, daughter of Richard Ennis, former Alvord personnel director who hired Esther, assists her with homework assignments.

When the new La Sierra facilities open, Esther plans to walk to school. She has a lot of good ideas for the classroom bulletin board and they all involve space!

Tests are given and a lot of oral assignments are designated and Esther stays one step ahead of her students by literally keeping vital information at her fingertips. For Esther, it's all in a day's work and she loves it!

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## NEVADA CONVENTION

by

K. O. Knudson

The 1969 annual convention of the Nevada Federation of the Blind was held November 7 through 9 in the Las Vegas Elk's Hall.

From the start to the finish, the convention reaffirmed its determination to fight for the improvement of the living standards of the blind and underprivileged; also the fight to remove the present supervisor of State Services to the Blind, Mervin Flanders, because of his insensitivity to the needs of all blind.

Mr. John Nagle, the National Federation of the Blind's very successful Washington, D. C. Legislative Representative for the past eleven years, was the keynote speaker. After



condemning the overall deterioration of state services to the blind in Nevada under Mr. Flanders, he pledged the National Federation's full support to the Nevada Chapter in removing the present supervisor. "We of the National Federation of the Blind will do whatever is possible and necessary to see that the present incumbent, as your Supervisor of State Services to the Blind here in Nevada, is removed from that office."

With the encouragement of a very enthusiastic audience, Mr. Nagle went on to review the legislative accomplishments and leadership of the National Federation of the Blind in bringing about equality and opportunity for the blind. State Representatives Norman Hilbrecht, Woodrow Wilson, Harry Reed, and Sy Adams, the Blind's King Lion, as well as other dignitaries were interested participants in the banquet.

State Senator Hecht represented Mayor Gragson at the opening ceremonies. Mr. Keith McNeal, Director of the Senior Citizens' Resource Center, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, gave a stimulating description of the many programs for volunteer service and recreational activities which are being initiated in Clark County for its Senior Citizens. He also lamented the fact that the state's Senior Citizens were going to lose out on one hundred thousand dollars' worth of federal programs if Nevada does not come up with fifteen thousand dollars. Dr. Morris Perlman gave an enlightening and hopeful survey of current eye research.

Mr. Karl Harris, the Director of the Department of Health, Welfare and Rehabilitation, gave an interesting talk on current problems and trends in welfare. He also spoke about State Services to the Blind.

Mrs. Dorothy Seigel, Supervisor of Special Education in Clark County, along with teachers Alice DeSart, Florence Field, and Andrew Macalvert, painted a graphic picture of how blind children in Clark County are being successfully educated beside their sighted brothers and sisters in the Clark County School System.

Audrey Tait, Manager of the Blind Center, spoke on its many activities. She emphasized that the center is carrying on programs for all blind people, including young and old, as well as those who are employable in the competitive labor market.

The convention was brought to a successful conclusion by the election of the following officers: K. O. Knudson of Las Vegas, President; Jean Savage of Reno, First Vice-President; Walda Kerner of Reno, Second Vice-President; Audrey Tait of Las Vegas, Secretary and Treasurer; Cleo Feller of Las Vegas, Chaplain. The following were elected to the Board of Directors: Ella Council, Las Vegas; Paul Quick, Las Vegas; Karl Clontz, Hawthorne; James Osmond, Reno.

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‘THE GOOD LISTENER’  
CHATTY FOR 33 YEARS  
by  
Joseph P. Ritz

[Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from Editor and Publisher, the weekly trade journal of the newspaper industry.]

When H. Katherine Smith asked the late Burrows Matthews, then editor of the Buffalo Courier-Express, for a job as a reporter he felt he had to hire her.

Miss Smith was unaware of it, but that June morning in 1927 the newspaper had editorially praised her perseverance and courage. The editorial was based on an AP story which told of her having just graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College, despite a lifetime handicap of blindness. In the forty-one years since she walked into Matthews' office, she has written more than five thousand feature stories and personality sketches for the Sunday edition of the Courier-Express.

To many Buffalo residents, reading her articles is as much a Sunday activity as going to church. To them, Miss Smith's chatty style as Buffalo's Good Listener, the heading of a series which began in 1936, has become as familiar as the roar of nearby Niagara Falls. Some of her other regular features are descriptively headed, "Men You Ought to Know" and "Who's Retired". As their titles suggest, they are the result of talks with western New Yorkers. But international names such as stage stars Sir Alex Guinness and Robert Preston and heads of state such as General Eisenhower and Queen Juliana have frequently appeared in her writings.

To interview them, Miss Smith has traveled to Hollywood, Europe, and South America. She believes she is the only blind journalist to have made such trips accompanied only by a seeing-eye dog. Her last such journey was made recently when she spent nearly a month in England and Ireland.

A typical story, airmailed from London, contained a description of the Trooping of the Colors, a brief item on effects of the English shipping strike, a capsule interview with the medical librarian of London University, and an account of a visit with a Vassar classmate, now the wife of a lord. In her travels, abroad and in the United States, she has flown in a glider, floated down an Ecuadorian river in a balsa raft, sped across Lake Erie on an experimental hydroskimmer and ridden on a fire engine.

When she is not traveling Miss Smith lives in her second floor flat with the fourth in a succession of seeing-eye dogs. Every day one of five volunteers reads her the local papers from which she gets most of her ideas for articles about area personalities. Most of her other leads come from friends or readers. Usually persons she wants to interview come to her home. If they cannot, she has someone drive her to their residence or office. She takes notes in braille. Last winter she bought a purse-size tape recorder which she uses during interviews when the subject matter is likely to involve technical terms with which she is unfamiliar.

“But I don’t like it,” she complains. “If you want to quote something it may be on the end of the tape and you have to play the entire interview.” After typing her story, the blind woman journalist has it read to her for corrections before it is mailed to the newspaper.

Despite her handicap, Miss Smith, now in her sixties, is more active than most housewives with normal vision. Every morning she swims in the Buffalo Athletic Club. A bridge enthusiast, she may be the only player to compete in championship tournaments while openly using marked cards. Several years ago, she was runner-up in the Buffalo bridge championships.

The local popularity of Miss Smith’s newspaper stories plus her example of determination have created a demand for her as a speaker before women’s and civic groups. Her talks fall into two categories: newspaper writing and her travels.

Recently she has aimed her writing talents at a new field—humorous poetry.

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## CALIFORNIA COUNCIL WINS IN COURT

Readers of the March, 1969 issue of the Braille Monitor will recall a legal action instituted by the California Council of the Blind against the State Department of Social Welfare, alleging that nearly 450,000 welfare recipients were receiving too small a grant of aid. The dispute between the Council and the Department arose from the cost-of-living increase which went into effect December 1, 1968. The Council charged that the increase was figured too low, that the cost-of-living increase should have been one dollar more a month for aged and disabled recipients and two dollars more for blind recipients and that the Department had illegally removed the cost of medical care.

In April the three-judge District Court of Appeals heard oral arguments, the Council being represented by B. V. Yturbide of San Francisco, a brilliant lawyer who happens to be blind. The Court rendered a unanimous decision in favor of the Council in October.

“In administering this [cost-of-living] formula the Department of Social Welfare acts mathematically and ministerially,” said the appellate court. “The Legislature has not endowed it with any discretionary power of subtraction of addition. The ‘interpretation’ urged by the Department would produce a result conflicting with fixed legislative directions.”

This decision, if it is upheld by the State Supreme Court, means that the aged and disabled recipients will receive one dollar more a month in their grants, and the blind two dollars more, both increases retroactive to December 1, 1968. The minimum grant of Aid to the Blind (less non-exempt income) will then be \$152 a month and the maximum \$202 a month, effective December 1, 1969 since an additional \$6.50 cost-of-living increase goes into effect then.

Once again, a handful of blind persons under the banner of the California Council of the Blind brings to a successful conclusion its efforts to redress the grievances of almost half a million recipients of Old Age Security and Aid to the Disabled. The Monitor salutes the conviction and courage of those three thousand blind persons, affiliated with the fifty-three chapters scattered all over the State, who comprise the California Council of the Blind.

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## NFB TESTIFIES ON SOCIAL SECURITY ACT AMENDMENTS

[Editor's Note: On November 5, 1969, John F. Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office of the NFB presented oral testimony on behalf of the NFB on H. R. 14173 and H. R. 14080, the Social Security amending bills, at hearings before the House Ways and Means Committee. He was permitted to submit a supplemental written statement for the record. That statement is reproduced here.]

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

H. R. 14173

Repeal of Titles I, X, XIV of the Social Security Act

We are unalterably opposed to all efforts to abolish the separate category of public assistance for the blind, enacted in 1935 under Title X of the original Social Security Act to provide for financial assistance to the blind as a separate category. In November of 1935, at the very beginning of the Social Security system, the Americal Public Welfare Association (APWA) published a pamphlet containing "suggestions" for a model piece of legislation as a guide to the states in the establishment of public assistance programs, a major recommendation being "integration" of the public assistance programs. The APWA, the creature of public welfare administrators and tightly controlled by them, has been unable to shake loose its preoccupation with the desire to abolish categories ever since, thus increasing the discretionary powers of administrators.

To establish a single adult category as is proposed in which the blind, the aged, and the disabled would be scrambled together in one poor relief barrel, where the distinctive needs of the blind, the aged, and the disabled would be completely disregarded, would be tragic, indeed. The problems of the aged are different from those of the blind, and the problems of the disabled are different from both, requiring each group to have separate categorical consideration. If rehabilitation—physical, social, economic—is to be the goal of Aid to the Blind (and it certainly should be), then the categorical approach must be retained and strengthened, not weakened or abandoned.

In 1935, when the Social Security Act was adopted by the Congress, some twenty-seven states already had adopted statutes establishing special programs of public assistance for the needy blind. At the present time, even seven years after the optional combined category for adult aid under Title XVI was enacted, two-thirds of the states make separate and special provision for their blind citizens who require help in meeting their basic

needs. These actions by the states are a recognition that the problems and the needs of the blind are different from those of others requiring aid.

The man who is eighty-seven, without a family and enfeebled; the man who is twenty-three, physically fit, vigorous and healthy, but blind; the completely paralyzed and bedridden mother of three small children, whose husband is unskilled and earns little; each of these presents a distinct social problem requiring the assistance of experienced, wise, and well-trained personnel to solve. Each has different and distinct needs.

If the aged, the blind, and the disabled are to be scrambled together in one general administrative heap; if a uniform budget is to be established for all aid applicants without regard for their special categorical needs; if agency rules and regulations are to be applied to all recipients alike as though they had similar needs and problems; if caseloads are to be an indiscriminate mixture of the aged, the blind, and the disabled; and if case workers are to be all things to all clients; then, the high purposes of self-care and self-support will soon be smothered and stifled by generalized administrative treatment, rather than fostered by categorical consideration of the special needs of the blind, the aged, and the disabled. Public welfare for these people will cease to exist as we have known it and will become merely a paymaster of public funds to public charges. Though they may be well provided for, though they will neither starve, go naked, nor lack for shelter, they will not be rehabilitated and resume normal, independent, and self-supporting lives. They will be and they will remain—public charges.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, we of the National Federation of the Blind urge you to strike out the provisions which would establish the mandatory Title XVI combining the aged, the blind, and the disabled.

#### Exemption of increases in Social Security Payments

We urge the Committee to insert a provision in the bill which would exempt all increases in Social Security payments made subsequent to January 1, 1966 from consideration in determining a person's need for public assistance and the amount of aid he should receive. There are at present some 2.8 million public assistance recipients whose Social Security payments are simply not enough to live on, hence are being supplemented by the states. A guarantee is needed that increases in Social Security payments provided by the Congress to raise the level of such payments will do just that, will be received by elderly and disabled persons. This is the only way to effectively protect the Social Security payment increases from being absorbed into the state treasuries rather than being passed on to recipients of public assistance who are also beneficiaries of Social Security payments.

#### Minimum Grant of Aid

We favor the provision for a minimum grant or a "floor to relief", but we feel that the Committee will wish to consider increasing this minimum from \$90 a month to a considerably larger figure. No more eloquent argument can be advanced for this principle than to look at the averages of the monthly grants for the United States as a whole. For the month of May, 1969, the Old Age Assistance average grant was only \$70.60; the Aid to the



Blind average, \$94.85; and the Aid to the Disabled grant, \$85.60. Safeguards should be inserted into the law to assure that the minimum grant does not also become the maximum and that special needs of individuals are provided for by increased grants.

#### Prohibition of Liens

We support the provision which would prohibit the taking of liens on the property of recipients as a condition for the receipt of aid. To pauperize needy persons who apply for public aid, to take from them the little property they may own, not only takes away from them the only material means they have upon which to build a new life—it also takes away their will to try again, to try and work their way back to a life of self-dependence.

#### Responsibility of Relatives Provision

While it is proposed in the pending bill that responsibility of relatives be abolished insofar as recipients of Old Age Assistance are concerned, relatives' responsibility is still retained for Aid to the Blind and Aid to the Disabled recipients. Why? Almost two-thirds of the recipients of Aid to the Blind are themselves sixty-five years of age or older and a large percentage of recipients of Aid to the Disabled are in the older age brackets. State laws or regulations which require, under penalty of legal action, family members to contribute to the support of a needy blind person are a denial of the high goals of public assistance, so bravely and boldly declared in the 1956 Amendments to the Social Security Act, the strengthening of family ties, the achievement of self-care and self-support.

The effect of enforcement of relatives' responsibility laws is to spread poverty, not to alleviate it. It humiliates and demoralizes physically handicapped recipients and their families alike. Such enforcement has worked injustice and hardship both upon the aging parents, passing out of the productive years of life, and upon their sons and daughters, still in the productive years of life but with the mounting responsibilities of their own immediate families. Such laws tend to disrupt and destroy family ties, not strengthen them. It results in replacing mutual affection with bitterness. It retards or completely prevents the development of the healthy family relationships which are a major purpose of the public welfare programs under the Social Security Act. We urge the Committee to prohibit the responsibility of relatives provision in state laws for the blind and disabled, just as the bill proposes to do for the aged.

#### Establishment of Advisory Committees

We applaud the provision for the establishment of advisory committees in connection with the administration of public assistance with such committees to include recipients as members. It is significant that the duties of such committees are not to advise, but to evaluate the operation of the programs. We can only hope that, in implementing this provision, the Secretary will insist that the spirit of this provision be translated into practice.

#### Limitation on Property

While the value of the home is exempted, there is an overall limitation of \$1,500



proposed on all other property, real and personal. On July 6, 1966—more than three years ago—the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Handbook Transmittal No. 86 issued regulations governing the upper limits which can be placed on real and personal property holdings. No monetary limits are required either on the home or personal and household effects and an automobile. No limitation is placed on the value of income-producing property provided that all net income is accounted for and taken into consideration in determining need. The sum of \$2,000 is placed as the limitation on cash reserves for each recipient. These regulations are currently in effect. Surely, the Committee will not wish to write into statute limitations which are less than those now existing.

#### Judicial Review

Under Title II of H. R. 14173, Sec. 446 (2) provision is made under the Family Assistance Program that final determination by the Secretary on a hearing of an individual shall be subject to judicial review. We urge that this same provision be included in existing Titles I, X, XIV and XVI of the Social Security Act.

#### H. R. 14080

Now, Mr. Chairman, I wish to give you our views on suggested changes on Titles II and XVIII of the Social Security Act.

#### Increase in Social Security Benefits

Certainly the National Federation of the Blind is in full accord with the necessity to increase the amount of benefits paid under the Social Security Act. However, we believe that the proposed ten percent is insufficient at this time. We believe that at least a fifteen percent increase is essential, effective December 1, 1969, in view of the rapid rise in the cost of living which has occurred over the past two years. We also feel that the proposal for a cost-of-living escalator provision should be enacted so that Social Security payments would at least keep pace with the rise in the Consumer's Price Index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This provision would in no wise preclude the Congress from re-examining from time to time the overall adequacy of payments under our national Social Security system and making such adjustments as it found equitable.

#### Medicare Coverage for Disability Recipients

A special task force appointed by the previous Administration recommended that Medicare coverage be extended to recipients of disability insurance under the Social Security Act. A similar task force, this time appointed by the present Administration, has recently recommended the same thing. We plead the need of disabled persons for health insurance protection. A person who qualifies for disability insurance benefits is in frequent, or even constant need of hospital services and medical attention, and the income of the disability insurance beneficiary is the same as it would be if he were to retire because of old age, so he is no better able than the older person to pay hospital charges and doctors' bills. It is our hope, therefore, that this Committee will act favorably on our proposal to afford health insurance protection to disabled persons under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

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"EMPLOYEE WELFARE GROUPS PERILED  
BY VENDING STAND BILL"--?

The Editor  
The Evening Star  
Washington, D. C. 20003

Dear Sir:

"Federal Spotlight" by Joseph Young appearing in the Evening Star of August 7 was recently called to my attention.

In his column that day, Mr. Young reported that leaders of Federal employee welfare and recreation groups predict the demise of their organizations if pending legislation to improve the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act for the Blind were to become law. The principal concern of these leaders, according to Mr. Young, is that the provision of the bill relating to the exclusive assignment of vending machine income in Federal buildings to blind stand operators in those buildings will deprive Federal employee groups of income they are now getting from these machines and are using to finance welfare and recreational activities. According to the article, these Federal employee groups may now share in up to 50 percent of the net proceeds from vending machines in Federal buildings.

The article indicates that concern about the legislation stems from the fact that the principal sponsor of the bill, S. 2461, Senator Jennings Randolph (Democrat, West Virginia), is the ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, to which the bill was referred and a close friend of the chairman, Senator Ralph Yarborough (Democrat, Texas).

Mr. Young quotes from a letter sent to Senator Yarborough by Mr. J. B. Stephenson, who is described as the president of Welfare Services, Inc., General Services Administration, Fort Worth, Texas. In his letter, Mr. Stephenson says "... We would strongly protest the inequity of providing further assistance to the vending stand operators at the expense of ending Federal employee welfare programs." Mr. Stephenson goes on to say that improved morale and esprit de corps of Federal employees is attributable to the income their welfare and recreation groups receive from vending machines, that this benefits the agency as well as the individual employees, and that this morale would be adversely affected if S. 2461 were enacted.

As the Washington representative of the American Foundation of the Blind, one of a number of national organizations which are vigorously supporting enactment of Senator Randolph's bill, I believe it would be helpful to readers of "Federal Spotlight", particularly those who are members of Federal employee welfare and recreation groups, if I briefly outlined the development of the Randolph-Sheppard vending stand program and the need for enactment of S. 2461. As the column indicated, Senator Randolph as a member of the House of Representatives thirty-three years ago was the co-author of the law which bears his name. This law was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 20, 1936; and it

states that preference shall be given to blind persons in the operation of vending stands and similar small businesses in Federal buildings. At that time, it was the major employment opportunity for blind persons outside of sheltered workshops. In the years since 1936, the Randolph-Sheppard vending stand program has resulted in gainful employment for thousands of blind persons, enabling them to support themselves and their families. Without it, many of them would have been tax consumers on public welfare instead of tax payers.

In addition to enabling thousands of blind individuals to earn their own way, the vending stand program has served to demonstrate to the public that severely disabled individuals are essentially normal people who are capable of running a business which involves meeting the public in an efficient and effective manner. I have no doubt that this demonstration played a significant role in the development of public policy implemented through a number of improvements over the years in the Vocational Rehabilitation Act to restore all types of severely disabled persons to the working force of the nation.

In the 1950's, when the vending machine industry began its rapid growth, machines were installed in various Federal buildings. Despite decisions of the Comptroller General of the United States questioning the legality, Federal employee groups began to receive income from vending machines in Federal buildings. Over the years, vending machine installation in government buildings has continued to increase, and Federal employee groups have increasingly received income from the net profits.

The impact on the business done by snack bars and vending stands operated by blind persons in those buildings has been great. Government employees and visitors who normally patronized the stand used vending machines located closer to their offices instead. Many blind stand operators suffered a sharp curtailment in income, and large stands employing a number of blind people had to let some of them go. Thus, the issue is not, as Mr. Stephenson indicated, a question of enhancing benefits to blind persons at the expense of employee welfare and recreation groups. Rather it is a question of the basic necessities of life for blind stand operators and their families versus picnics and other recreational activities for members of Federal employee groups. I have no doubt as to the choice rank and file members of such groups would make if they understood the issue and its history. I am sure they would prefer to seek other financing, as any fraternal organization would, for recreational activities and flowers for sick members rather than deprive a blind person of his livelihood.

Since Mr. Stephenson expresses concern about the effect of curtailment of vending machine income to Federal employee groups on the morale and esprit de corps of Federal employees, I am sure he will agree with me that the best way of guaranteeing high morale of workers is to provide them with adequate compensation for their work. I have no doubt that the series of pay raises for Federal workers in recent years, including the one effective in July of almost 10 percent did more to boost morale than would countless parties financed by vending machines in Federal buildings.

Mr. Stephenson should know that Senator Randolph also happens to be a key member of the Senate Committee on Post Office and Civil Service and in that capacity has played a significant role in the laudable Congressional effort to achieve comparability with industry

in Federal pay rates. He and his colleagues should seriously consider an expression of appreciation to the Senator for his effort to see to it that Federal workers are well compensated.

Before closing, I would like to point out that S. 2461 was co-sponsored by a substantial number of senators of both parties and that the bill seeks to make a number of urgently needed improvements in the vending stand program of which the vending machine income question is only one. If enacted, the bill will expand employment opportunities for many more blind persons, thus enabling them to become self-supporting, taxpaying citizens. We and the other national organizations interested in the program greatly appreciate the longstanding interest of Senator Randolph and his colleagues and hope that the bill will receive the wide public support it deserves.

Very truly yours,

Irvin P. Schloss  
Legislative Analyst

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#### NEW JERSEY CONVENTION

by

Constance Rich

On October 25th and 26th, The State Council of New Jersey Organizations of the Blind held its annual convention at the Empress Motel at Asbury Park, New Jersey. Saturday morning's session was given over to the Chapter reports and, Council President George Burk's report on the achievements of the Council during the past year.

President Kenneth Jernigan spoke at the afternoon session on the reasons why states should belong to the National Federation. He also stressed that if we, the blind, wanted to accomplish anything, we must stick together, since in unity there is strength. During the afternoon session we had a panel discussion on our Convention Theme, "Employment, and Rehabilitation". The following speakers from the New Jersey Commission participated in the panel discussion: Mr. Irving Kruger, Head of Rehabilitation, Mr. Dan Sullivan, representing Home Industry, Mr. Hyman Klein, representing dual handicaps and Victor Polara, Social Security Disability Insurance and, Mr. Joseph Kohn, Executive Director of the State Commission for the Blind. This panel was moderated by the National Federation's President, Kenneth Jernigan.

The highlight of this year's convention was the impressive address by Mr. Jernigan.

The Sunday session dealt with such matters as Constitutional revision of the name of this state organization to be: New Jersey Council of the Blind. Seven resolutions were passed. The annual election of officers for the coming year was held and, the following

persons were elected: President, George Burck; First Vice President, Raymond Taliaferro; Second Vice President, Mrs. Esther Epaminonda; Secretary, Nicholas Kovac; Treasurer, Mrs. Vennie Relyea. The three delegates at large are: Mrs. Dorothy Duser, Dannie Draper, and Mrs. Annie Rose Johnston. Mrs. Constance Rich was reappointed Editor of the Council Chronicle.

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## NO "INSURANCE" AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

[Editor's Note: Once again blind persons have been the object of discriminatory practices by an insurance company. The following correspondence describes the action taken by the United Commercial Travelers of America Insurance Company in response to John and Susan Ford's application for insurance. The Fords' response, in the form of correspondence with NFB President Kenneth Jernigan, follows.]

United Commercial Travelers of America  
632 North Park Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

October 28, 1969

Dear Mr. Ford:

At the last regular meeting of the Benefits Committee your application for membership and insurance was declined because of your vision impairment.

Should you care to affiliate with us as an Associate member, an application for that purpose is enclosed. Please complete this form and present it to Brother Harris, who was instrumental in the filing of your original application.

Under the circumstances, we have instructed the Secretary of Gallatin Valley Council No. 721 to return the payment made by you.

Regretting that a more favorable decision could not be rendered, we remain

Yours very truly,

M. H. Cooper, Manager  
Underwriting Department



903 West Dickerson  
Bozeman, Montana 59715  
November 9, 1969

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Enclosed, please find a copy of a letter refusing our insurance application specifically because of "visual impairment" from the United Commercial Travelers of America. Let me tell you of our ideas for protesting the refusal; please comment on them and add any other suggested means for proceeding.

This insurance group is a fraternal organization which has local social meetings as well as selling insurance policies. John had thought he might obtain an associate membership without the insurance and attempt to get the local group to take a resolution to the UCT national convention next summer which would change their policy so that they will insure blind and other disabled persons unless it can be proven that an individual is more prone to accident or less likely to live to a reasonable life expectancy.

We had also thought that we might attempt to obtain a policy statement from the Montana state Auditor, who, evidently, serves as Insurance Commissioner.

You might also be interested to know that when we applied for medical and accidental death insurance from Globe Life, they put our applications through with no questions asked. We also got some medical insurance from the American Estate Insurance Company with no trouble. Someone may also have had good results with these companies, but if not, you will be glad to know that there are a couple of other companies who consider blind people a reasonable insurance risk.

Please look over our United Commercial Travelers situation, and we will be waiting for your comments in reply.

Sincerely,

John and Susan Ford

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National Federation of the Blind  
524 Fourth Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309  
Kenneth Jernigan, President

November 14, 1969

Dear John and Susan:

I have reviewed the Travelers letter to you, and it is the standard case of

discrimination, based doubtless upon sincere belief, good intentions, and no evidence. By all means I think you should protest the matter in the ways you mentioned, and any others you can think of. If there is any way the National office of the Federation can help, we will, of course, be happy to do so. In the meantime, push forward with vigor.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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ON CONVENTIONAL THINGS  
(Author Anonymous on Request)

Halloween night, 1969, in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, brought no ghosts or goblins or masquerade balls. It found instead members of the California Council of the Blind hard at work in the early hours of the fall convention. The usual slate of committees was scheduled; White Cane Week and Fund Raising, Chairman Al Gil; Resolutions, Chairman, Lawrence Marcelino; and Credentials, Chairman, Gail Coward. By mid evening the convention was well under way.

Several interesting resolutions were introduced at the Resolutions committee hearing Friday night, provoking spirited discussion in which few people failed to participate. Among the dozen resolutions heard by the committee, was one which urged the Council to go on record in opposition to the Murphy Amendment to the O.E.O. authorization bill now before the House of Representatives. The amendment would seriously jeopardize, if not eliminate entirely, legal assistance provided to poor people by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Another resolution requested the Council to take measures to enable the relatives of blind students to receive compensation for their time spent in reading. At present an administrative regulation--either regional or state-wide--prevents parents, brothers and sisters, and spouses of blind people from being paid for reading services. Another resolution urged the Council to reject the policy adopted by the Executive Committee of Cal-Expo concerning the right of blind people to ride the "devices".

The meeting adjourned shortly after 12:30 A.M. by which hour the crowd had dwindled somewhat and the action decentralized. Revelry could be heard from various crannies of the hotel until the very small hours of Saturday morning.

One of the highlights of the convention was the presence of Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind. Mr. Jernigan made two formal talks, a report on the Federation and Federationism Saturday, and a banquet speech. He also took every opportunity to meet and talk to individual Council members.

At the banquet, Mr. Jernigan quoted extensively from Joseph Hunt, top rehabilitation

official in the country, on blindness and how blind people should be treated. The essence of Mr. Hunt's thesis was that reality must be carefully interpreted to the blind person, especially to the newly blinded. Before describing any aspect of the environment to a blind person, the sighted person should pose himself three questions: "Is it kind?" "Is it true?" "Is it necessary?" In the precarious psychological condition of new blindness, a person should be protected from the ugliness around him. Mr. Hunt advocates that reality should trickle into the consciousness of the blind person through the triple filter of the sighted person's perception, edition and prescription. Mr. Jernigan's intent was to point out the custodialism and paternalism that still exists in the minds and policies of those responsible for the programs of the blind.

President Jernigan also described the situation in Colorado where a blind person is not accepted as a valid witness in a court of law even when the crime or offense has been perpetrated against him. The thrust of Mr. Jernigan's talk was that despite the progress that has been made in recent years, public attitudes about blindness are still based on erroneous assumptions laden with misconceptions. Our efforts to change them must be directed toward "the bastions of the public mind" and that of the "agency mind".

The banquet was delightful. The food was exceptionally good and spirits very high. In addition to Mr. Jernigan's talk, three awards presentations were made. First, a scroll was presented to Bob Deems, a San Diego law student for having won a five hundred dollar Council scholarship. The Council citation was awarded to Mr. Bill Reagan for his faithful and effective work as fundraiser for the Council. The Council had a new award to bestow this year, the Jacobus tenBroek Award of the California Council of the Blind. This award was created to recognize devotion and service to the interests of the blind. The first recipient of the Jacobus tenBroek Award was a very deserving and completely surprised Muzzy Marcelino.

Among Saturday's other offerings were a panel discussion of future trends in Aid to the Blind, moderated by Perry Sundquist; a panel discussion on the role of young people in the Council, moderated by Lynda Bardis; a discussion of the possibilities for social action on the part of minority groups, by Bob Richards, Head of the Department of Urban Affairs, University Extension, San Diego; and a discussion on the Manpower Program by Bob Rosenberg, Consultant to the Assembly Health and Welfare Committee, California Legislature.

After adjournment of the general session Saturday afternoon, meetings were held by various special interest groups: California Industries for the Blind workers, Vending Stand and Cafeteria operators, and students. In competition with these meetings was a tantalizing item on the agenda, "Beauty and Fashion Show". Male, as well as female conventioners were interested. The big question was, of course, whether or not spectators would be allowed to "Braille" the models. There were, alas! no models at all. The event was actually a seminar on fashions and hair styles conducted by a very lovely lady from a Hollywood charm school.

A strange phenomenon appeared outside the convention hall Sunday morning as the bedraggled devotees to the cause trickled in. A pair of scales and a determined "weightress" barred the door to the Blossom room. No, it was not another manifestation of the concern

for physical beauty on the part of the Council leadership, but rather the kick-off of a new fundraising campaign for the International Federation of the Blind. Each person going into the session was weighed (totally voluntarily, of course,) and his name and weight recorded on a card (which is to be kept in a locked file). At the spring convention, the same people will be weighed again and the three people who have made the most progress toward their ideal weight--whether gaining or losing was indicated--will be crowned Mr., Mrs., and Miss A-Meal. Great glory and prizes will be theirs. Participants will contribute fifty cents per pound gained or lost to the IFB.

The general session began amidst confusion Sunday morning as the Council President and others attempted to explain the Miss-A-Meal contest. A certain amount of disgruntlement had resulted from the disagreeable sight of scales first thing in the morning after. Order was soon regained, however, and the discussion of resolutions began.

One of the most interesting controversies followed a motion to eliminate the Friday evening hearings of the Resolutions Committee. The proponents of the motion believed that such a measure would stimulate more exchange of ideas and opinions on the floor of the general session. At least the authors of the resolution would be sure to appear to defend their proposals. Opponents of the motion contended that the more relaxed atmosphere of the Friday evening meetings stimulates and encourages uninhibited debate. The restrictions on time are vastly less constraining than in the General Session. The motion was defeated, but the debate was useful in that it stimulated re-evaluation of convention traditions and provided information to newcomers.

The remainder of the day was filled with reports on the progress of federal legislation, the negotiations between CIB workers and the Department of Rehabilitation, and the work of the Committee on Employment Assistance. The Council president gave an account of what action had been taken on the resolutions adopted at the last convention. Jim McGinnis and Tony Mannino presented an interesting discussion on the elements of leadership.

A problem has plagued Council conventions, as it probably has all other conventions, for some time. That is that delegates fail to recognize their duty as elected representatives of their chapters and leave before the convention is adjourned. At approximately 3:30 P.M., Sunday, one weary but dogged delegate moved that roll be taken. Over-generous President Tony allowed two minutes for anyone who wished to round up straying delegates before the call. He said, however, that he believed the call to be a good idea and that in the future no time would be allowed before beginning. The rounders-up worked fast, probably finding many of the delegates congregated in one place, and to the surprise of everyone, very few failed to answer when called. Albeit some chapters had but one of their two, but they were represented.

The convention seemed to leave a positive impression with everyone. Many new ideas were expressed, and as usual, much, much work planned for the coming months.

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## THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN SHELTERED SHOPS

by

Lawrence T. Smedley

[Editor's Note: The following speech was given at the recent National Convention of the NFB by Mr. Smedley who is Assistant Director of the Department of Social Security, AFL-CIO]

It is a pleasure to be here today to talk to you about the rights of workers in sheltered workshops. It is a particularly timely topic since people to an ever increasing degree are demanding greater say in those programs which directly affect their lives. One important by-product of the war on poverty has been the realization that programs cannot be fully successful unless those directly affected by these programs can participate in their planning and administration. There seems to be the beginning of a very important development - a change in social programs from the clientele approach to citizenship control.

Organized labor believes that the sheltered workshop can play a role in preparing the disabled for an active and productive role in competitive industry. However, there are a number of things about sheltered workshops that cause us concern - an area of particular concern has been the rights of sheltered workshop employees.

In most workshops, the rights of sheltered workshop workers are a secondary and not a primary concern of workshop managers. For even in the best sheltered workshops run by well intentioned managers, decisions on working conditions are, with a few exceptions, wholly and unilaterally at the discretion of management. In short, workers' rights are what management says they are.

Let's be realistic. An individual cannot make much of an impact in our society when large organizations and institutions are so influential in the democratic process. Union members have learned from long experience that the help and assistance usually go to the strong and well organized and the legitimate demands of the weak are usually ignored. There are few factors more important to the well being of a worker and his family than his job. If this is so, it logically follows that bringing economic democracy to the workplace is equally important as political democracy in the community.

I am aware of the National Labor Relations Board ruling by a 3 to 2 vote denying sheltered workshop employees coverage by the National Labor Relations Act. I think the decision was wrong and, in fact, damaged an essential part of the rehabilitation process. If the purpose of rehabilitation is to restore an individual to function normally in society, it is only appropriate that he experience in a sheltered workshop those situations and conditions which he can be expected to experience as a regular worker in society. Organized labor realizes that bargaining rights by themselves do not insure a satisfactory work life for handicapped workers. The total situation involves numerous complex factors. But collective bargaining is an essential protection against unfair exploitation and as the foundation for a more democratic and pleasant work environment.

I could not come to the State of South Carolina and talk about the collective bargaining rights of workers in sheltered workshops without discussing a kindred group - a



group of hospital workers in the nearby city of Charleston, South Carolina. A successful settlement has just been reached in one of the two hospitals on strike after almost four months. These workers had to strike largely because they were not covered by either a State or Federal collective bargaining law and had no other recourse to win union recognition and to bargain collectively. I am sure it will come as a surprise to you that at the time the strike began the wages of these employees, who have no physical or mental handicaps, were a little lower than the low average wages earned by employees in workshops for the blind.

Like sheltered workshop employees, the aims of these hospital workers were modest - decent wages and working conditions, and a sense of their own dignity and worth as first class citizens of their community. Without this strike these people, who have received nationwide attention, would probably have continued for the rest of their lives working for substandard wages because the State and community didn't care or didn't know they existed.

As you can see, achieving their full rights as citizens is not only a problem faced by sheltered workshop workers but is also faced by millions of other Americans. The AFL-CIO is determined to do everything in its power to win first class citizenship for all the lowest paid and most exploited people in our society.

Sheltered workshop workers should have rights guaranteed by law whether they are members of unions or not. Guarantees of basic rights are an essential protection against unfair exploitation and that conditions in sheltered workshops will be beneficial and pleasant. Unless sheltered workshop workers are given the rights of other workers, their self-respect and rights as citizens are seriously jeopardized. This will only perpetuate and intensify economic dependency and helplessness of sheltered workshop employees. The workshop environment will not be fully conducive to the purpose of restoring the individual to normal living and, in turn, an essential rehabilitation ingredient, the worker's motivation, will often be thwarted by bitterness and frustration.

Similarly, too many sheltered workshops offer few real choices for job training. The workers learn simple handicrafts and numbly acquire knowledge of production methods unknown in commercial industry. Where this is the case, the individual is able to function only within the sheltered workshop's contrived environment for he is psychologically unable to adjust to the larger community.

These outmoded methods cause low wages for low productivity and low earnings are often due more to the inefficiencies of the workshop management and not to the productive limitations of the workers. But regardless of their productivity, organized labor feels all workers willing to work should receive adequate wages whether in competitive employment or not. As W. Somerset Maugham in his book "Of Human Bondage" pointed out: "There is nothing so degrading as the constant anxiety about one's means of livelihood....Money is like a sixth sense without which you cannot make a complete use of the other five."

In short, low wages can damage the emotional and physical well being of many disabled persons as seriously as a disease and can destroy human spirit and dignity as well. Workshops have a right to seek support from the community to give work to the disabled

but only if they intend to pay wages consistent with self-support and self-respect.

There seems to be a new ferment in America out of which the central task of our time is being created - the question of helping the disadvantaged in our society. The disadvantaged refuse to be ignored and are no longer willing to live out their lives in quiet desperation. This is an affluent society and, as someone has said, evils which are endured without protest when they are regarded as incurable become intolerable as soon as the means to escape from them are available.

The discord that is erupting in our society causes many people great concern and it should. But many are much too pessimistic when they express great foreboding about the future of our nation. All of us are too prone to forget when going through the painful process of social change that history shows that social ferment is often a creative force and that most of the great accomplishments of any society were preceded by social discord. The rebirth of the labor movement in the 1930's is a particularly apt example. George Bernard Shaw summed it up pretty well when he said that Switzerland after more than 300 years of peace, prosperity and neutrality had managed to create the cuckoo clock.

The Democratic system has managed to resolve even more difficult problems in the past and, undoubtedly, will successfully resolve those of the present time. I know that those of us who work in Washington are often discouraged by the slow legislative pace and even, on occasion, the retrogression. One distinguished minister of the gospel once remarked that he still believed in God in spite of the clergy. Well, I think all of us believe in democracy in spite of the politicians and have faith that if we work together and work hard it is inevitable that we shall achieve our goals.

So in closing these brief remarks, I want to assure you that the AFL-CIO is mindful of its obligations to the disadvantaged and there is no group that has more qualifications to meet the definition of disadvantaged than those who labor in sheltered workshops. And though the positions of our organizations on this subject may not be identical, it is our desire to join with other organizations like the National Federation of the Blind in order to maximize the efforts of all of us who work in behalf of the goal to provide all of those who labor in sheltered workshops those rights and working conditions essential to dignity and self-respect. In these efforts, of one thing you can be sure, organized labor is willing to do its share.

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## MONITOR MINIATURES

California and New York lead the states with the most children on the welfare rolls. The two states together account for almost one-third of all the 4,815,000 children receiving aid under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. California has long ranked first in the total number of all types of welfare recipients, totaling 1,550,000 or 8.1 percent of the state's total population. In New York there were 1,375,000 recipients, or 7.6 percent of the population. Although fewer persons over sixty-five live in California than in New York, there are more than three times as many elderly persons receiving welfare payments in California than in New York. In California 18.1 percent of all persons over sixty-five—about one in five—receive public assistance, compared with 4.4 percent in New York.

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Myrna Dawe of Klamath Falls, Oregon, is really a busy person! Here is her immediate program: appeared again before the Lion's Club to speak about employment for the blind; maintaining her four studies with the Hadley School; went on a week-end camping trip with her two daughters and 200 Girl Scouts; active correspondent for the Klamath Falls newspaper; chairman again of the annual Christmas bazaar which will be held to raise money for a malnutrition center in Saigon; conducted a two-hour radio show. What do you do with your spare time, Myrna?

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Donald Gagne, President of the active Dubuque Association of the Blind (Iowa), reports that Congressman John C. Culver was the guest speaker at a recent Association meeting. Congressman Culver discussed the NFB's Disability Insurance Bill and stated that this is needed because of the discriminatory practices which confront the blind and believes that the bill has an excellent chance of being passed.

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Recently the blind American singer, Jose Feliciano, sought an audience with Queen Elizabeth in London. Jose's problem is his collie guide dog. When he came to England a year ago the dog had to stay in quarantine kennels at the airport. He now wishes to avoid a repeat performance of that kind. England has long had quarantine laws because it is rabies-free. So does the State of Hawaii, and for the same reason.

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Mexico was one of the first of the Latin countries to show interest in the literacy of its blind citizens, when Ignacio Triguerras founded the earliest school there in 1870. But Mexico is also the country with a blind village—Tiltepec, in the State of Oaxaca, with 900 inhabitants who are totally or partially blind. They are the victims of a parasite that breeds in mountain springs and spreads disease. They speak an old Indian language from before the days of the Conquistadores. They live in crude huts and have neither school nor church. One

other area where blindness is almost universal, and no faintest beam of literacy penetrates, is Adiaman in Turkey where fewer than 250 of the population of 7,000 have sight.

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Due to rising physician fees, the Nixon Administration will probably ask for an increase from \$4 to \$5 a month in the premium paid by the aged to the Government for the voluntary or Part B portion of Medicare, which partially pays doctors' fees and other nonhospital expenses. The rise in the monthly premium would go into effect next July 1, but Medicare law requires the HEW Secretary to make known the new rise by January. The Part B premium started at \$3 a month in July, 1966, when Medicare first went into effect but was raised to \$4 a month the following year. In addition to the expected Part B increase, Nixon has already asked an increase in the separate Part A portion of Medicare--hospitalization--which will mean that the aged will have to pay the first \$52 rather than \$44 out of their own pockets for hospital stay.

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Dominic Sposeta, blind San Jose (California) attorney, was recently sworn in before the U. S. Supreme Court in Washington, D. C. so that he might practice before the high tribunal. One of twenty-two blind attorneys in California, Sposeta handles a large caseload dealing with criminal appellate work. He was formerly counsel and administrator for the Santa Clara County Legal Aid Society.

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The Nevada Federation of the Blind recently requested permission to get into the gaming business. Mrs. Jean Savage of Reno, First Vice President of the organization, appeared before the State Gaming Control Board seeking permission to lease slot machines in casinos to provide funds for the organization's activities. The Chairman of the Board said that the plan poses "a sticky legal problem" and asked the Board's attorney to research the situation and prepare a legal opinion on it.

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The Progressive Blind of Missouri recently presented its Third Annual Benefit Performance of Lee Mace and His Ozark Opry. The show was a full two-hour family-type affair made up of lots of comedy, folk songs, old time fiddle tunes, some of the old time handclapping spirituals and a few of the more modern type songs.

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Governor Robert Ray of Iowa purchased the first box of "White Cane" Candy from Don Morris to start the Iowa Association of the Blind's current fundraising drive. Chairman Phil Parks reports that sales are exceeding last year's at this time.

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Fifteen disabled students who attend Chabot Junior College in Oakland (California) met with a committee of administrators to present a list of their special needs. They are seeking to change regulations which allow teachers to ban tape recorders in the classroom; to have ramps constructed to the upper floors of campus buildings for the use of students in wheel chairs; elimination of turnstiles in cafeterias and other rooms and provide individual keys to the one main building elevator that will accommodate wheel chairs but is kept locked. The leader of the group is a blinded veteran of World War II.

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A three-judge Federal Court in New York City ruled unconstitutional a New York State residence welfare law barring assistance to anyone applying within one year after arrival in the state. In voiding the law, which was passed to discourage those who would move into the state for the sole purpose of getting welfare assistance, the court noted that the U. S. Supreme Court had unequivocally barred a state from discouraging entry of indigents, regardless of their motive in migrating, holding that such laws are in violation of the equal protection clause of the federal constitution.

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Listen, published by the Catholic Guild for all the Blind, is twenty years old! The Boston bi-monthly publication was launched to inform the blind of happenings of interest to them and also to educate the sighted public. The Braille Monitor extends its congratulations to Listen.

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At the request of the House of Representatives of the State of Hawaii, Fifth Legislative, the National Federation of the Blind conducted a survey and evaluation of services to the blind in the State for the purpose of insuring adequate programs for the needs and welfare of Hawaii's blind citizens. The survey team visited the State in late November and the results of the study were transmitted to the Speaker of the House prior to the convening of the 1970 session of the Legislature. Upon its arrival in the Islands, members of the team were greeted at plane side with beautiful leis from the Governor of Hawaii and escorted to the Governor's Lounge at the Honolulu International Airport where they were entertained and interviewed by reporters from Honolulu's daily newspapers. The President of the Hawaii Federation of the Blind, Mr. Warren Toyama, was on hand to welcome the visitors from the mainland.

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At the October 1969 meeting of the Arizona Association of Workers for the Blind, James Carlock, president of the Arizona Federation of the Blind, was elected first vice president. It was quite a month for the Carlock's. They also became the proud grandparents of Jaime Antonio Ferniza when their daughter Sandra, who is married to Staff Sgt. Juan Ferniza of the U. S. Air Force, gave birth to a son.

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Oral O. Miller, president of the American Blind Bowling Association writes that it is time for all bowlers to join the national organization-especially those on the west coast. The ABBA plans to conduct the national championship tournament in Portland, Oregon in 1971. In 1969 the national tournament attracted 167 five-man teams and about 960 individuals.

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On November 23, 1969, the Mahoning Valley Association of the Blind, Inc., Youngstown, Ohio held their election of officers with the following results: President, Mrs. Theresa Ulicney, 33½ W. Evergreen Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio; Vice President, Mrs. Marylou Cahill, 160 N. Brockway, Youngstown, Ohio; Secretary, Miss Emogene Rittger, 138 Heaton Blvd., Niles, Ohio; Treasurer, R. L. Rees, 4114 Windsor Road, Youngstown, Ohio; Executive Board member, Mrs. Theresa Ulicney, Youngstown, Ohio; alternate to Executive Board member, Mr. Pete Wanack, 503 Sherwood Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio; bulletin reporter, Mrs. Shirley Stowe, 1 Olive Street, Niles, Ohio.

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The Wyoming Association of the Blind lost a long-time leader with the death of its former president John Eckhardt in October. He operated a snack bar in the post office in Cheyenne for many years. Eckhardt was very active in the state's vending stand operators organization. He helped with locating, purchasing, and supervising stands throughout the state.

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Mr. Frank Lugiana, immediate past president of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind has received a commendatory resolution from the Senate of Pennsylvania.

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When F. Paul Gray of Old Lyme, Connecticut, lost his sight in 1965 he was forced to make the countless adjustments, large and small, that were necessitated by his blindness. His attempt to solve a minor but very annoying problem, led him to develop a solution to one of the major problems faced by the newly blinded, the creation of satisfying and productive employment. As Mr. Gray recalls it, "I had one problem which I am certain is familiar to almost everyone, but especially to sightless persons. I constantly dropped the soap in the shower and was unable to find it without much hazardous groping." In his search for a solution, Mr. Gray began to look for a "soap-on-a-rope" to wear around his neck or hang on the shower head. When none of the commercial products he sampled proved satisfactory, he decided to have a soap manufactured to meet his own specifications. However, the quantities he had to order were so large that Gray converted his plan into the first stage of a completely commercial venture and entered the field of men's toiletries with his own brand of "soap-on-a-rope", hand soaps, skin moisturizers, and so on. Gray had stumbled upon the basis of a thriving business enterprise. Gray himself designed the packaging for his products and christened the line Gentlemen's Choice products. In fact his handsome design won him

honorable mention in 1966 in a nationwide packaging design competition. By now Gentlemen's Choice products include a broad range of men's toiletries including after-shave lotion and cologne. Distribution is being handled by mail orders and Gray states that the products, complete with a gift card if desired, can be sent anywhere.

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Twenty-five drivers of the Sports Car Club of America along with twenty-five legally blind individuals assembled on October 19th for the second annual Toledo Braille Sports Car Rally. The blind people were navigators and the Sports Car Club members were the drivers. All instructions for the rally were either in Braille or large-print. The rally course was sixty-five miles long, had three time check points, and took approximately two and one-half hours to complete. The course wound around the country side between Toledo and Bowling Green, Ohio. The cars were on everything from express-ways to one lane dirt roads. Each car was checked at each of the three check points for time. If the car is one second early or one second late, the driver and navigator are charged one point. Fifteen seconds early or late meant fifteen points. Three typical rally instructions might read as follows: Turn right after bridge; left after Route 105--maintain average speed of thirty-five miles per hour; right at four-way stop--wait one minute within the next mile. There were ten pairs of trophies given out, one each to the navigator and driver of the top ten team finishers. The top three blind navigators were: Ann Marie Smith, 16 points, Mary Ann Smith, 40 points; and Mary Ellen Reihing, 51 points.

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Howard Hartley, who in his mid-sixties lost his sight after a lifetime of journalism, struggled successfully to create a new career for himself in broadcasting on a Florida radio station. Actually, broadcasting was not new to Mr. Hartley; with his wife, Jo, a journalist herself, he had covered numerous stories for Florida newspapers and radio stations for many years before becoming blind. Radio reporting seemed to fit in well with his interests, abilities and long experience. His program on WINQ, Clearwater, Wednesday and Friday at 11:10, is called "Florida Profiles". He created the program's format--half interview, half news. "The idea", said Mr. Hartley, "was to talk to the people who are making the news. After all, they're a pretty good source." He has had a future astronaut, south Florida college professors, and military men, only a few examples from the broad range of newsmakers who have been interviewed. Hartley's only restriction is that "People have to know what they are talking about". To prepare a program Hartley uses, instead of a script, the more informal device of a ten minute warm-up conversation in which the major points to be discussed on the actual program are developed and given some organization in terms of priorities.

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The Washington State Association of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind lost a devoted worker with the death of Mr. Thomas Gronning on November 30, 1969. He spent the last ten of his eighty years serving in almost every position of the board of trustees of WSAB. Mr. Gronning retired as president of the Association in August, but he

was still serving as chairman of the Publications Committee at the time of his death. His personal accomplishments, realistic sense of values, and cheerful disposition have made many friends for him.

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Many NFB convention goers will be saddened by the news contained in a recent note from Gwen Rittgers of Missouri: "On the morning of October 6, Eva Anderson dropped dead at the bus stop. She was on her way to work at the Kansas City Association for the Blind. Eva willed her body to the KU Medical Center for medical science. Eva was born in Kansas and attended the Kansas State School for the Blind. She graduated with high scholastic honors. Eva was an industrious person, subsidizing her living by making rugs, bath mats, and other handcraft articles during the depression years. During World War II, she worked at North American Aviation here in Kansas City. Eva worked for the K. C. Association for many years as well as filling in as a relief operator in the vending stand program here in Missouri. Eva attended as many national conventions of the blind as possible, and was present this summer at Columbia. She was a member of the Progressive Blind organization and was active in its projects."

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Mrs. Florence Grannis, Librarian of the Iowa Commission for the Blind writes: "Over the past few months we have been testing a number of cassette cartridge tape recorders. We have found them very satisfactory and it is presently planned to gradually convert our entire tape collection from 7-inch reels to cassette cartridges. We will be recording some textbook materials on cassettes. We will be receiving a very limited number of cassette machines and when we possibly can we will lend these machines to students [in Iowa] who do not have their own cassette machines providing the books they need have been recorded on cassette cartridges. We will be purchasing a number of inexpensive cassette machines which we will sell at our cost through the aids and appliances division of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. At present we have not determined exactly which machines we will purchase or what their cost will be.

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[The following was sent to the Monitor by Delaware Federation of the Blind president Joseph Spence.] The Delaware Federation of the Blind, newly founded in December of last year, found it was difficult to function without money in the bank. The first meeting of our Ways and Means Committee was a discussion of the pros and cons of fundraising. Candy sales are being run by all the local churches and schools; Christmas cards rank about the same as candy; and fifty-fifty chances are becoming so common that people will only buy on larger jackpots. So we began searching for another source of income, one that would acquaint the public in our area with the fact that our organization did exist, that blind people are working together to further their own cause. One member of our group who had lived in another state previously, told of his experience with the braille ashtray as a means of income. By coincidence we had just received a pamphlet from the Philomatheon Society of Canton, Ohio, a group of blind people who produce and market the braille ashtrays and

similar objects. Since we were new, we decided to be conservative and order the smallest amount possible in order to safeguard ourselves in the event that the item would not sell. To date we have sold twelve hundred braille guide-dog ashtrays at one dollar apiece. Our small orders cost us a bit more than if we purchased on a larger scale; however we do not have storage available for much more than the ten cases which constitute a small order. Our purchase price, plus shipping costs, are less than fifty cents per ashtray; we feel this one hundred percent profit is better than most items we could handle. We have been amazed at the results some of our members have had with this versatile object. It is primarily an ashtray, but with cookies or home-made candy placed in it and wrapped with Saran Wrap, it makes a very nice gift. Many of our customers have returned to say that their children are learning to read some braille by practicing with this ashtray. If nothing else, we are educating the public while having a successful fundraising campaign.

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